

F1 2021 Perez wins amid Baku tyre drama

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10 JUNE 2021

BAKU BLOWOUT

Verstappen robbed but Red Bull scores as Hamilton blunders with 'magic' button

'The tyre just blew. Sometimes this sport is very harsh'

VERSTAPPEN



PLUS

BMW eyes **Le Mans 24 Hours** return

Ogier beats Evans in **Rally Italy**





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Drama denies Max but Lewis misses his chance to topple Red Bull

The Baku street circuit has provided some dramatic moments in its short history in Formula 1, and last weekend was no exception. But the tyre blowouts that first spat Lance Stroll into the wall and then cost Max Verstappen victory are not what anyone had in mind.

Failures happen of course, but investigations will need to be thorough because cars being pitched into barriers at 200mph is one of the most serious dangers F1 has faced for some time.

Almost as surprising as the Pirelli situation was Lewis Hamilton's error at the final restart. As Alex Kalinauckas shows in our report on page 16, three drivers *could* have won the Azerbaijan Grand Prix and Hamilton was one of them; this time he didn't take his chance.

Whether the race should really have restarted over just two laps – with all previous gaps erased as no aggregate result was used – is highly debatable, but it did provide action. Hamilton's drive against the faster Red Bulls had been impressive, but his 'magic' button mistake (above) means that instead of moving 14 or 21 points ahead of Verstappen in the drivers' championship he is still four behind. Neither has been perfect this year, and that Azerbaijan faux pas could prove crucial at the end of the campaign.

Hyundai again missed its chance in the World Rally Championship, too. Turn to p34 for Tom Howard's account of how Toyota's Sebastien Ogier extended his points lead against the odds.



Kevin Turner

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NEXT WEEK
17 JUNE

Ferrari's latest revival
How the Italian team is
bouncing back, plus
WEC & BTCC action



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BMW tasted Le Mans glory in 1999 with V12 LMR of Winkelhock, Dalmás and Martini



BMW EYES LMDh FOR TOP-LINE

LE MANS 24 HOURS/WEC/ELECTRIC GT

The LMDh prototype class and FIA Electric GT Championship are among the options for BMW as it plots its factory future in motorsport beyond the end of its 2020-21 Formula E Championship campaign. And it is pretty much certain that there will be one, according to the man at the helm of BMW Motorsport.

Markus Flasch, who is now in charge of BMW's competitions department, stated last week that he envisages the German manufacturer having a motorsport involvement at a higher level than its ongoing customer programmes in GT3 and GT4, and with the entry-level M2 one-make racer. Evaluation of what exactly that will be is already under way as the marque's involvement in FE with the Andretti team moves towards its conclusion with the climax of the 2020-21 championship. Decisions could be made very quickly, he insisted.

"I didn't take this responsibility to administer the current status [of customer programmes]," said Flasch, who is boss of the BMW M brand, into which BMW Motorsport has been now been incorporated. "I know where we come from, where our roots are, and I think there is room on top of GT3 for BMW. We are looking into other formats than [those] we are currently involved in and there will be decisions quite soon."

He replied in the affirmative when asked whether the LMP2-based LMDh category, which will allow manufacturers to race in both the World Endurance Championship and the IMSA SportsCar Championship from 2023, is on BMW's radar. Asked if that ability makes it an enticing prospect for a marque that has a long-standing involvement in the North American

sportscar scene, he replied: "Yes it does. That is part of our analysis, absolutely."

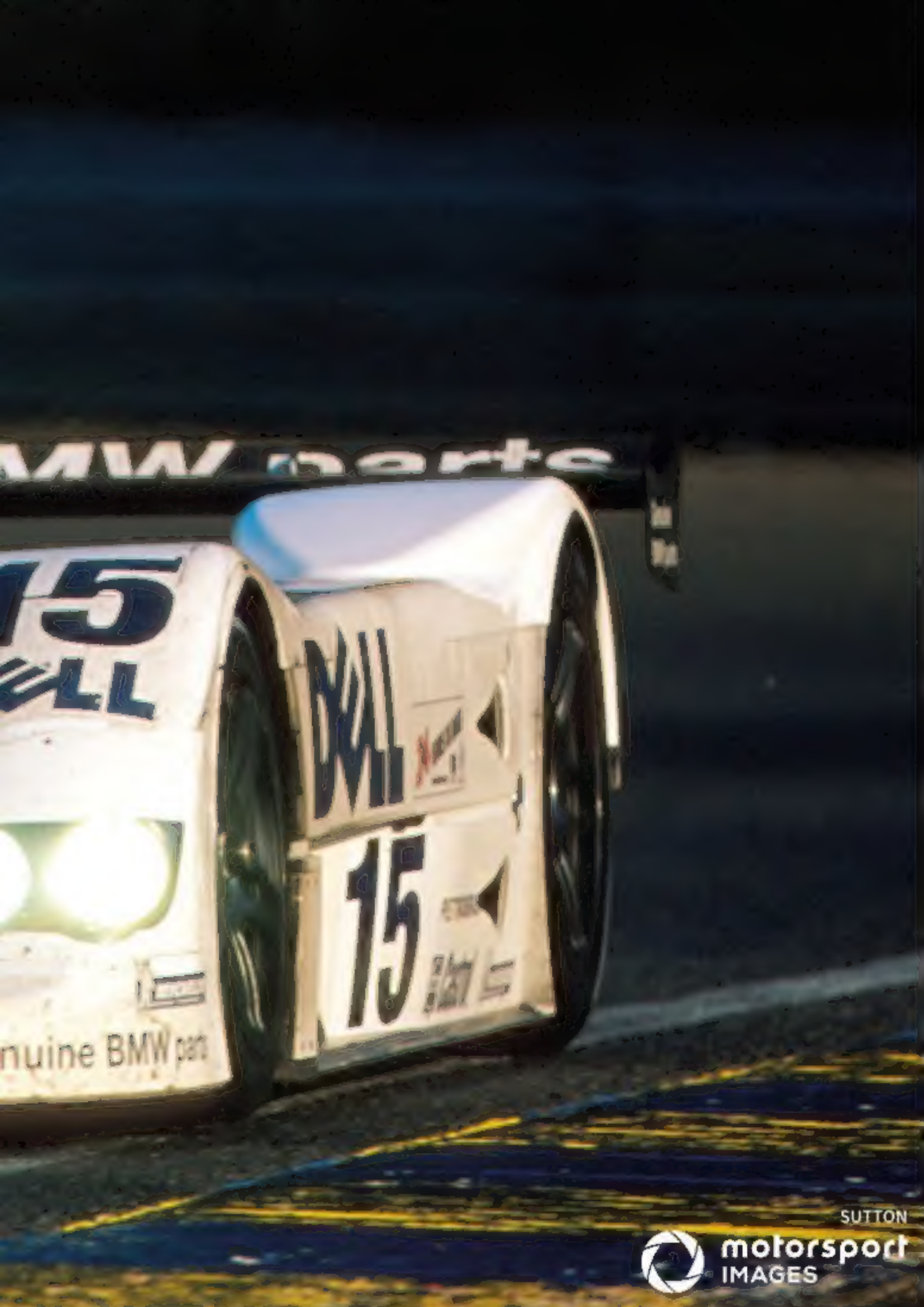
An LMDh prototype programme would mean a return to the top flight of sportscar racing for a manufacturer that won the Le Mans 24 Hours in 1999 with the V12 LMR. The Williams-developed machine also contested that year's American Le Mans Series, winning on its debut at the Sebring 12 Hours, and raced on in the championship in 2000, even though BMW did not defend its Le Mans crown.

Flasch revealed that BMW is "very interested" in the FIA's eGT series announced last month. "We have been in discussions with the FIA," he explained. "If this series is going to be fast enough, spectacular, then we are going to be in it. [But] we are not pushing just because it is electric: it has to make sense for the fan."

Flasch wouldn't elaborate on these comments about a class that has been conceived to achieve GT3 levels of performance. But he did take an apparent swipe at FE, which BMW joined as a full factory participant in 2018-19. "There are series in the world that are electric and everyone runs in them, but they never really reached the fans," he said. "We have learned from that: we are not just running after ideas like lemmings."

BMW indicated that the GT programme run by its North American arm, which stretches back to 1995, is likely to continue into 2022. IMSA's replacement of its GTE-based GT Le Mans class with GT Daytona Pro for GT3 machinery will coincide with the arrival of the new M4 GT3 next year.

Mike Krack, who runs BMW Motorsport under Flasch, revealed a desire for the M4 to compete in the new category. "It is little bit too early because GTD Pro



RACE RETURN

is in creation," he explained. "We have a long history there and it would be strange when you have a new car coming not to be present."

Asked if BMW would aim to run a full factory operation, as is the case at the moment with the Rahal team, Krack replied: "Yes, probably similarly to what we have been running in the GTE [GTLM]." Should WEC promoter the ACO and the FIA follow IMSA's lead and replace the GTE ruleset with GT3 after its present two-year commitment up to the end of 2022, it would be a "good thing for us", added Krack.

The new M4 (below) is due to undergo its first development race in the NLS on the Nurburgring Nordschleife at the end of June. No drivers have been announced for the debut of a car that has already completed more than 8500 miles of testing. Flack also revealed that BMW is working on competing in a GT World Challenge Europe round this year ahead of the car's homologation for next season.

GARY WATKINS



Toyota pegged back as Glickenhaus arrives

WEC

Toyota's Le Mans Hypercars have been pegged back for this weekend's Portimao 8 Hours World Endurance Championship round on the arrival of Glickenhaus in the series. The Japanese manufacturer's GR010 HYBRIDS have taken a double hit under the Balance of Performance for the Portuguese event.

The two GR010s will run 26kg heavier – 1066 rather than 1040kg – at the Algarve Circuit than at last month's Spa 2021 WEC opener. They will also be allowed 515kW rather than 520kW, a reduction of approximately 7bhp at peak power.

The two Pipo-engined Glickenhaus 007LMH non-hybrid prototypes will be allowed the full 520kW and run at the 1030kg minimum weight prescribed in the regulations for two-wheel-drive LMH machinery.

The BoP table tweaked last week has also reduced the amount of energy per stint for the Toyotas from 964 to 962MJ. The Glickenhaus will be allowed 965MJ per stint.

The Alpine-Gibson A480 grandfathered LMP1 car has also taken a performance hit for the Portimao WEC fixture. The ORECA P1 design that formerly raced as the Rebellion R-13 will compete at 952kg rather than the 930kg it weighed at Spa. Its Gibson engine has been reduced

by approximately 5bhp on the levels at which it raced at Spa.

The reduction in the performance of the Toyota and the Alpine for the Algarve fixture follows a public debate at Spa led by the Japanese manufacturer over the pace of the Hypercars in comparison with the LMP2 prototypes. Toyota argued that moves to slow P2 machinery from last year had not been enough, and that there was not an adequate separation between the two categories.

It was insisted by Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director Pascal Vasselon that the two classes of prototypes needed to be in "different ballparks". Vasselon stressed that the arrival of the Glickenhaus would compound the problem because of the need to balance cars in the Hypercar class, and suggested that the proximity of the P2s to the new breed of prototype left little margin.

• The field for the Monza WEC round in mid-July is set to be the largest outside of the Le Mans 24 Hours since the inaugural year of the reborn championship in 2012. The full-season entry will be bolstered by the Risi Competizione ORECA LMP2 and four additional cars in GTE Am. That brings the grid up to 38 cars, compared with the 42 that began free practice and the 40 that started the race at Spa in May 2012.

GARY WATKINS



Singapore GP falls victim to pandemic again

FORMULA 1

October's Singapore Grand Prix has been cancelled for the second year in a row, leaving Formula 1 to weigh up replacement options including a US double-header.

The promoters of the race at the Marina Bay Street Circuit announced last week that they could not welcome F1 due to "ongoing safety and logistic concerns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic". Singapore has maintained low infection

numbers throughout the pandemic by implementing a tough immigration and test-and-trace system, making it impossible to run the event.

"To cancel the event for a second year is an incredibly difficult decision, but a necessary one in light of the prevailing restrictions for live events in Singapore," said race deputy chairman Colin Syn. "We would not be able to deliver a full event experience fans have come to expect over the years, while safeguarding

the health and safety of our fans, contractors, volunteers and staff. Ultimately, we have to be responsible, cautious and prudent as safety is our number one concern."

F1 is already in talks with a number of race promoters about plans to replace Singapore on the calendar, exploring various options to keep the calendar at its current 23 races.

Races in Turkey and China are possible options after both races were postponed due to restrictions, but F1 is

also known to be considering a second race in the US. With doubts lingering over the races in Japan, Australia, Mexico and Brazil, F1 could opt to run back-to-back races at the Circuit of The Americas near Austin, Texas.

Indianapolis Motor Speedway, which staged the US GP from 2000-07, also holds a Grade 1 circuit licence for its road course, but the track said there are "no plans at this point to host an F1 race this year".

LUKE SMITH

'Windbags' at dawn as flexi-wing row fades

FORMULA 1

Formula 1's flexi-wings saga fizzled out at last weekend's Azerbaijan Grand Prix when Mercedes and Red Bull did not follow up on their threats to protest each other.

F1 teams have faced scrutiny over their rear-wing designs since Lewis Hamilton's "bendy wing" comment, referring to the Red Bull, at last month's Spanish GP, prompting the FIA to introduce new rigidity tests from next week's French GP.

Azerbaijan was the final race where teams taking advantage of the loophole could run the designs, but they were still subject to threats of action over their legality. McLaren team boss Andreas Seidl said early in the weekend there would "need to be action" if teams were seen to be running flexing wings. The FIA fitted yellow locator stickers to the rear wings so they could police the matter, but ultimately no action was taken, leaving it up to teams to lodge a protest.



Red Bull F1 boss Christian Horner warned his Mercedes counterpart Toto Wolff that a protest would result in a counter-move against Mercedes' front wing, joking that this was flexing "to expose the new sponsor on the front wing".

"If you're picking on one end of the car, you have to look at the other," said Horner. "You have to look at all areas. Sometimes, you have to be a little bit careful what you wish for. If I was Toto with the front wing he's got on his car, I'd keep my mouth shut."

Wolff hit back by calling Horner "a bit of a windbag who wants to be on camera," adding: "It's easy to be punchy when you're

on the top of the timesheets, but you should be a little bit more modest."

By Saturday evening, Wolff said that he was "bored" of the flexi-wing saga, which passed by on Sunday as no teams opted to lodge a protest, meaning the results stood.

Asked about the war of words between their respective team bosses, Hamilton and Max Verstappen came up with a novel idea to settle the score. "We should get them in a ring," said Hamilton, before Verstappen pointed out that "the weight division is a bit of a problem, with the height and the reach".

LUKE SMITH



FORMULA 1 Pirelli is investigating the tyre blowouts that caused Lance Stroll and Max Verstappen (pictured) to crash out of last Sunday's Azerbaijan Grand Prix. Pirelli F1 chief Mario Isola suggested debris in the aftermath. "What I have collected so far are just preliminary indications," he said. "It was sudden deflation both for Lance and for Max, without any warning. It was on the rear left tyre. That is not the most stressed here." **Photograph by Sutton/Motorsport Images**

Monza DTM races shortened to ease fuel worries

DTM

The DTM's first races under GT3 regulations next week at Monza will run to a reduced duration of 50 minutes to minimise the risk of cars running out of fuel.

Although the series is going through a major overhaul after ditching the Class 1 ruleset, it is carrying forward its previous format of two races per weekend, each lasting 55 minutes plus a lap.

Concerns were raised by the Walkenhorst Motorsport BMW team about cars being able to cover the full distance at a power-sensitive track such as Monza due to an aggressive Balance of Performance set by the DTM, which significantly pushes up the fuel consumption. As a result, the DTM says it has taken a 'proactive measure' by cutting both Monza races by five

minutes, ensuring that drivers can make it to the finish without having to resort to excessive fuel-saving.

Walkenhorst claimed that drivers would have missed the chequered flag by several laps if the race distance was not altered and the BoP not

adjusted in order to achieve better fuel mileage.

"The 2021 DTM stands for powerful GT race cars, an open competition of the world-class drivers and spectacular races," said Frederic Elsner, director of event and operations for DTM promoter the ITR. "Therefore, we

are playing it safe and, in view of the altered regulations and the premiere at this unique high-speed track, have adapted the race duration."

The DTM is making its maiden visit to Monza this year as part of an eight-round calendar split equally between home country Germany and the rest of Europe. The dates for seven of those rounds have already been confirmed, while the prestigious Norisring street event, originally scheduled for July, has been indefinitely postponed in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

The DTM has 18 confirmed full-season entries, but recent speculations suggests that Porsche Carrera Cup GB racer Esmee Hawkey could join Belgian Esteban Muth in a second Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo run by German team T3 Motorsport.

RACHIT THUKRAL





Mansour Ojeh 1952-2021

OBITUARY

A key player in the McLaren team for nearly four decades, Mansour Ojeh died last Sunday. He was 68.

Ojeh was a charismatic personality who was much admired in the paddock, and was the quiet driving force behind the rise of the team after Ron Dennis took control in the early 1980s. He provided not just vital investment but also the vision that allowed McLaren to expand into road cars and become the organisation that it is today.

Born in 1952 and a French citizen, he studied business and law in California, so was ably qualified to help his Syrian-born father Akram expand the family firm. Techniques d'Avant Garde encompassed interests in construction, aviation, arms and real estate, mostly dealing with Saudi Arabia.

A visit to the 1978 Monaco GP inspired Ojeh to convince his father to sponsor Williams. Later that year, the TAG name first appeared on the car of Alan Jones as one of several Saudi-related companies alongside the national airline. Still in his early twenties, Ojeh became the face of TAG at the circuits.

Success in F1 came quickly. TAG was prominent on the Williams when Alan Jones won the world championship in 1980, and when Keke Rosberg triumphed in 1982.

Although Ojeh enjoyed a good

relationship with Frank Williams, he had bigger ambitions for TAG. Those were realised when he established a relationship with Dennis, who had taken control of McLaren at the end of 1980. Dennis had identified Porsche as the ideal source of a turbocharged engine, but the Stuttgart manufacturer required funding. He persuaded Ojeh to back the project, and the TAG Turbo engine was born. Ojeh originally wanted Williams to use it too, but the team preferred to go with Honda.

The new engine raced for the first time late in 1983, and in 1984 the McLaren-TAGs of Niki Lauda and Alain Prost set the pace, with the Austrian winning the title. TAG continued to sponsor Williams, but the deal concluded at the end of that year.

Ojeh switched his full focus to McLaren, becoming a shareholder and an influential figure behind the scenes as F1 budgets went up, and the company expanded. Alain Prost won titles with TAG power in 1985 and 1986, but by 1987 the engine was outperformed by Honda. Ojeh backed a switch to the Japanese manufacturer for 1988. The team dominated, with Ayrton Senna beating Prost to the title. The Frenchman then won in 1989, before Senna added two more successes in 1990 and 1991.

Meanwhile, Ojeh backed Gordon Murray's McLaren F1 road car, which culminated in victory at Le Mans in 1995, and founded the hugely successful TAG Electronics, later rebadged under the McLaren name.

McLaren joined forces with Mercedes in 1995, beginning a new era for the team. Mika Hakkinen won the title in 1998 and 1999, with Lewis Hamilton adding the most recent success in 2008. Later the team went through some tough times, and tensions rose after a troubled reunion with Honda in 2015. Ojeh and Dennis, partners for over 30 years, had a major falling out, which led to Dennis's departure in 2017.

Ojeh bought the Heuer watch company in 1985, making TAG Heuer into a major brand before selling it, and established an aviation business. He underwent a double lung transplant in 2013, but still travelled to races. He counted celebrities such as Michael Douglas among his friends, and was well-liked by fellow team bosses and other paddock luminaries. Always close to McLaren's drivers, Ojeh established the sort of genuine friendships that they couldn't always enjoy with Dennis.

He is survived by his wife Kathy, their daughters Lana, Lia and Sara, and their son Sultan, who became a director of the McLaren Group in June 2020 and will continue to manage the family's interests.

ADAM COOPER





Amato Ferrari (right) celebrates
Le Mans 2019 class win with
Calado, Pier Guidi and Serra

AF to run Ferrari's Hypercars

WEC

Ferrari will continue its long-standing relationship with the AF Corse when its Le Mans Hypercar comes on stream for the 2023 World Endurance Championship. Manufacturer and team will again join forces to run the new prototype, just as they have done with a succession of GT cars over the past 15 years.

The Ferrari LMH prototypes will be entered under the Ferrari-AF Corse banner in what was described on Monday's announcement as a collaborative effort between the team and the Competizioni GT department masterminding the new programme.

The confirmation of AF was labelled "an important step towards the debut of our LMH in the WEC" by Ferrari sportscar racing boss Antonello Coletta. "We are happy to have a reliable partner like AF Corse with us for this project," he said.

Unrelated AF boss Amato Ferrari described the chance to work with Ferrari on the LMH programme "as the crowning of a dream and recognition of the great effort made over the years". He added that he is "delighted to continue a winning partnership".

Ferrari and AF first linked up in 2006 with the F430 GT2 for a campaign in the FIA GT Championship. They began on a high, winning the class title for the first of three years in succession.

AF has been at the Le Mans 24 Hours every year with a Ferrari factory effort since 2008, taking class victories in 2012, 2014 and, most recently, 2019. Their continuous involvement in the GTE Pro category of the WEC has yielded five manufacturers' and three drivers' titles.

But for all AF's successes in the GT ranks, it is no stranger to the prototype arena. It ran the Pecom Racing LMP2 entries, first with Lola chassis and then ORECA, in the Le Mans Series and then the WEC in 2011-13. Most recently, it fielded the Cetilar Racing Dallara P2 in the 2019-20 WEC.

Few other details of Ferrari's first factory prototype programme in 50 years have been announced. Technical partners are unconfirmed, but Ferrari has stated that it expects its LMH to be up and running in the second quarter of next year.

AF will continue to field a factory team of 488 GTEs in the GTE Pro class of the WEC up to the end of 2022.

GARY WATKINS

IN THE HEADLINES

FERRARI'S RESHUFFLE

The Ferrari Formula 1 team has completed a reshuffle of its management, which means team principal Mattia Binotto has moved from the pitwall to the garage from last weekend's Azerbaijan GP. Ravin Jain, a 26-year-old Briton, has become the new head of strategy. He takes the role from Inaki Rueda, who is now the sporting director. With only seven seating positions allowed on the pitwall, Binotto has moved from the frontline, similar to Mercedes boss Toto Wolff.

ZAK BROWN RACES McLAREN

McLaren Racing CEO Zak Brown will race a contemporary McLaren this month for the first time since joining the organisation in 2016. Brown will drive a 570S in the GT4 European Championship event at Zandvoort on 19-20 June for his United Autosports squad. His co-driver for his first race in a McLaren since 2013 will be team co-owner Richard Dean.

SPA IS FLOODED OUT

The Spa circuit was hit by heavy flooding last Friday, which damaged the track and caused the cancellation of the venue's traditional Spa Euro Race event. The run from La Source to Eau Rouge turned into a river, lifting the track surface and flooding tunnels. Circuit management pledged to have the track operational again by Tuesday of this week.

RINS IS WASHED OUT

Suzuki MotoGP star Alex Rins was forced out of last weekend's Catalan Grand Prix with a broken right arm. Ironically, the injury was sustained when he fell off his pushbike while riding around the Barcelona circuit on the Thursday. Suzuki opted not to replace Rins, whose absence comes hard on the heels of four successive race crashes, for the event. Rins underwent surgery, and now faces a fight to regain fitness in time for next week's round at the Sachsenring.

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Pourchaire breaks wrist in clash with Ticktum, Armstrong



P44 F2 REPORT

FORMULA 2

Formula 2 sensation Theo Pourchaire suffered a broken left wrist in a first-lap clash in the feature race at Baku last Sunday.

The 17-year-old Frenchman, who became the youngest second-tier race winner of all time in the previous round at Monaco, was involved in a collision at Turn 3 with Dan Ticktum and Marcus Armstrong. Armstrong was eliminated on the spot, Pourchaire retired in the pits, while Ticktum continued after a change of front wing.

ART Grand Prix driver Pourchaire later

said he had broken his wrist, while an FIA statement said: "Theo Pourchaire has been taken to The Central Hospital of Oil Workers for treatment of a fractured arm." That leaves him facing a battle to return to fitness in time for the next round, supporting the British Grand Prix at Silverstone on 16-18 July.

Carlin-run Williams F1 junior Ticktum was blamed for the collision and was handed a 10-second penalty. He served this at his second pitstop, and it likely cost him fourth place in the results. Instead, he finished eighth.

The Briton wrote in an Instagram post: "Tough one, the cars in front at T3 braked so early so I went for the gap [on the inside]. The car on the right [Armstrong] properly squeezed the car in the middle [Pourchaire] which then left me with no room. The car in the middle actually made contact with the car on the outside before I made any contact at all!"

"To get a 10-second penalty for that is beyond ridiculous but it's all happened now. The pace was obscene so I really think I could've won today."

MEGAN WHITE

Noble delivers as Brits ramp up domination

LE MANS CUP

Colin Noble fended off Matt Bell for victory in an extraordinary UK whitewash of the top positions in last weekend's Le Mans Cup round at Paul Ricard.

Noble, driving the Nielsen Racing Ligier JSP320 started by Tony Wells, ambushed the Cool Racing Ligier of Bell for third, before taking second from Dominik Schwager's Rinaldi Racing Duqueine. This became the lead when Josh Skelton's Cool Ligier caught fire in the pits. Following their final stops,

Noble came under staunch pressure from Bell, but held on to win by a little over a second.

First-round winners Tommy Foster and Michael Benham

finished just over one second shy of the podium in fourth, with Foster right on the tail of the United Autosports Ligier that Wayne Boyd had taken over

from 64-year-old American John Schauerman.

The second United machine, driven by BRDC Rising Stars coordinator Andy Meyrick and Brazilian Daniel Schneider, finished sixth after Meyrick had been spun around by Boyd.

Herberth Motorsport took a similarly close-fought win in the GT class, where Porsche specialists Alfred Renauer and Daniel Allemann beat the Iron Lynx Ferrari of Rino Mastronardi and guesting FIA Formula 3 star Logan Sargeant by just 0.864s.

JAMES NEWBOLD





Vince Woodman 1937-2021

OBITUARY

Vince Woodman, who died last Wednesday aged 83, nine years after suffering a stroke in the British Racing Drivers' Club Clubhouse at the 2012 British Grand Prix, was among the most able and best-loved saloon car racers of a golden era.

Businessman-racer Woodman's ability to engage with clients and commitment to service were reflected in the immaculate preparation standards in the establishment of VMW Motors near Bristol. By 1970, at 33, he was England's youngest Ford main dealer. Racing showcased this.

After hillclimbing locally, Woodman started circuit racing at Castle Combe in 1965 with a Lotus Cortina, then switched to Broadspeed Escorts. He graduated to the British Saloon Car Championship in 1971, finishing runner-up from the 1300cc class in an Escort-BDA carrying VMW's blue-and-white livery. He also racked up many club racing victories.

Woodman was a BSCC fan favourite until 1989, winning 12 races. He ran a Chevrolet Camaro in 1974-75, but the three-litre capacity limit presaged a return

to Blue Oval products and the most successful era of his driving career. His breakthrough victory came in the 1976 British GP support race at Brands Hatch. Old pal Jonathan Buncombe also won in Esso-sponsored Ford Capri V6s, and they finished third in the 1977 Spa 24 Hours.

Woodman kept close to his roots, campaigning a Broadspeed-built 'Cologne-type' Capri powered by a 3.4-litre 450bhp Ford Cosworth GAA engine. Elsewhere he raced Rover, BMW 635CSi and a Sierra RS500 in the BSCC. In 1982 he matched TWR Rover driver Jeff Allam's points tally, but Allam took the class title on a tiebreak.

Among Woodman's finest drives was finishing second (at 47!) in Donington's 1984 European Touring Car round with James Weaver in a BMW 635. He and John Cleland won three Thundersaloon titles, in 1986 with a Vauxhall Senator-badged Holden Commodore, then 1989-90 with the mighty Vauxhall Carlton TS6000, a combo rarely defeated. His final win came at Combe in 2008, fittingly where his racing started 43 years earlier, sharing his beloved Capri-GA with preparer Dan Cox.

MARCUS PYE

IN THE HEADLINES

NANNINI WITH CAMPOS

Promising Italian racer Matteo Nannini returned to the Formula 2 grid for last weekend's Baku round, after missing the Monaco event. Nannini had dropped his F2 programme with HWA Racelab to focus on his FIA F3 campaign with the German squad, but has now stepped in to replace cash-strapped Gianluca Petecof at Campos Racing. Nannini's uncle Alessandro partnered the team's late founder Adrian Campos at the Minardi F1 team in 1987.

MOTOGP RIDER MARKET

KTM MotoGP star Brad Binder has pledged his future to the Austrian marque until the end of 2024 in a new three-year deal. The South African gave KTM its first MotoGP victory at Brno last year. The Pramac Ducati team, meanwhile, has confirmed that it will retain Johann Zarco and rookie Jorge Martin for 2022. Remy Gardner, son of 1987 500cc world champion Wayne and current leader of the Moto2 standings, will step up to MotoGP with the Tech3 KTM team.

BEARMAN'S MISANO DOUBLE

Continent-trotting 16-year-old Brit Ollie Bearman moved to the top of the Italian Formula 4 rankings last weekend with two wins at Misano. Bearman, driving for Van Amersfoort Racing, chased Leonardo Fornaroli (Iron Lynx) home in the first race. He then held off Prema's Sebastian Montoya in the second clash, and defeated Fornaroli in the third.

YOUNG ON THE PODIUM

Another Brit on form at Misano was 2019 Clio Cup UK champion Jack Young. The Northern Irishman stepped into the cauldron of panel-bashing ferocity that is TCR Italy, and finished third in race two in an MM Motorsport Honda Civic, after technical problems forced him out of second place in the opening bout. Franco Girolami (Honda) and Antti Buri (Hyundai) were the winners.

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Changes behind 'feel-good' result

The joy of all three Baku podium finishers should soften the hearts of the most jaded F1 fans. Now, for Sebastian Vettel in particular, will Aston's upturn be sustainable?

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Sporting podiums are not always packed with smiling faces. In some contests, only victory will do. The losers' medals from football finals often apparently cannot be located years after the event, or so goes the oft-trotted-out explanation of many ex-professional pundits.

Silver and bronze Olympic medals are mighty achievements to the individual recipients, but will not be recorded in history with the same crowning achievement as the golden champion. Then there are victory celebrations being used for political point scoring (in many cases even hosting sporting events is intrinsically linked to politics) or tarnished by controversy. Formula 1 has plenty of experience of the last example.

Last weekend's Azerbaijan Grand Prix podium was packed with positivity. Only the most ardent Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton fans would have been hard-pressed not to revel in the joy being expressed by the three drivers and two teams that have not occupied such exalted positions all that often in recent years.

Sergio Perez was naturally delighted with his triumph, the best proof provided that he can finally give Red Bull what it has been missing since Daniel Ricciardo departed: that he can be there to pick up the pieces when things go wrong for Verstappen, challenge for victory on his own terms, and disrupt things for Mercedes.

In the aftermath of Perez's win, Red Bull seemed to be exploding

"Vettel's own irrepressible positive energy was on full display via his team radio"

with cathartic joy, dealing with Verstappen's shocking retirement thanks to his tyre blowout in a bursting expression of relief. Perhaps this feeling was exacerbated by Hamilton's mistake at the second standing start, meaning the points swing of Verstappen's exit was nullified, and because Red Bull was so concerned that Perez's hydraulic pressure problem would lead to his own retirement in a race the team had been dominating.

In third place, Pierre Gasly was irrepressibly happy after seeing off Charles Leclerc with brilliant driving in a hobbled AlphaTauri during the two-lap sprint shootout. He was just delighted to complete a set of career F1 podium placings.

And then there was the Aston Martin's marque's first F1 podium, taken by Sebastian Vettel. Red Bull rightfully expects victory. AlphaTauri has successfully and understandably created a

car package and culture such that it is now disappointed with low points-paying results, where just a few years ago they would have delighted the ex-Minardi team. Despite the success and pace attained last year as Racing Point, with its RP20 'pink Mercedes', the Aston/Vettel partnership had a tough start in 2021.

The green team was impacted by the rear floor rule changes, which it initially railed against, while Vettel couldn't match the early points finishes Lance Stroll picked up and was often left fighting slower cars. As a true F1 great, his decline at Ferrari, and this apparently transferring over to his new start at Aston, was hard to watch. Surely, no one likes to see any driver struggle.

But the last two races have brought breakthrough results, Vettel's own irrepressible positive energy on full display via his team radio in finishing fifth in Monaco and on the Baku podium. In both races he delivered excellent overcut strategies. In both, he smartly saved his rubber at key points and then unleashed that tyre-life advantage to devastating effect on his rivals.

In Monaco this was Hamilton and Gasly. In Baku, once he'd jumped Yuki Tsunoda, Vettel reaped the rewards for not overconsuming his hard tyres early in what should have been the second and final stint. That paid off at the safety car restart following Stroll's blowout. He could battle past Leclerc and Gasly, which then put him in place to capitalise when disaster befell Verstappen, and Hamilton messed up his braking at the second start.

"I was confident that at some point it would start clicking and obviously Monaco was great," Vettel said of his uptick in form. "You can argue that it takes off a bit of pressure, but I think the expectations in general are fairly high at the beginning of the year, so it was good to get a good result. For [Baku], I think we were fairly open-minded. It's another street circuit, it's a place where I think you can make a difference if you really feel confident with the car."

That confidence has come from changes Aston made to its floor — so critical to its performance given the difficulties the lower-rake packages have had in 2021 — which Vettel ran for the first time at the Spanish GP. Further updates followed in Monaco and seem to have helped with the lack of consistent rear stability that was plaguing Vettel earlier in the year.

The next phase of the F1 season is going to be critical. Monaco and Baku are outlier events given their city settings. Paul Ricard, Red Bull Ring and Silverstone return the championship to much more predictable ground, where the challenge of getting the tyres working properly comes in other forms. Here, then, lies the real test of Aston's progress and Vettel's form.

The same is true of Mercedes and Red Bull, so those podium smiles could be even more telling after the next four GPs. *AK*

16 AZERBAIJAN GP REPORT



Don't be too rigid about flexi-wings

Provided strict parameters are observed, allowing F1's super-brains to develop flexible technologies could have big-scale benefits for the automotive world and beyond

RODI BASSO

The science of aerodynamics and the particular impact it has on Formula 1 cars has always offered interesting opportunities for debates. To make it straight and simple, every driver and F1 engineer would dream of having all the downforce in the corners (grip-limited areas) and the lowest downforce level on the straights to get the maximum possible top speed. But in life there is always a cost, and in aerodynamics the cost of downforce is drag.

With fixed wings, as stipulated by F1's rules, there is no easy way to be in the sweet spot for each sector of a race track, and this is why overtaking has been so difficult. It goes some way to explaining why the DRS (Drag Reduction System) was introduced to improve the show. So far, none of this generates arguments. But there is a grey area, as the FIA defines the level of stiffness for many parts on the car in order to have a fixed behaviour of the aerodynamics at speed.

The teams can vary the downforce dynamics only through a limited amount of settings such as angles of attack (ie front flap angles), wing surfaces and rake (difference between rear and front rideheight) for a given aero map. The reason why the FIA keeps this sort of monitoring is because aeroelasticity is a complex science, and complex technologies are expensive and risky if a team gets it wrong. Conversely, we heard about a proposal for active aerodynamics, which is where I personally get a bit confused. This is what prompted me to draw the conclusion I share later.

“What if engineers could find a way to harvest energy from the bodywork movements?”

There is a category of teams that try to push the boundaries of the rules. And their competitors claim they are cheating! With ‘flexi wings’, the aim is to flex the aero wings in order to reduce the drag level as the speed rises by reducing the cross-sectional area ($\text{Drag Force} = \text{Constant (air density)} \times \text{Drag Coefficient} \times \text{Velocity}^2 \times \text{Area}$). This is why a rear wing for Monaco has a broader sectional area compared to a rear wing for Monza.

From an operational standpoint, the FIA checks aero part stiffness by applying a load and measuring the displacement. In the words of FIA technical director Nikolas Tombazis, this static test is not adequate as it is not representative of all the real load profile the wings are experiencing. This explains why the teams are still able to pass the FIA tests while allowing wing flexibility. And there are multiple strategies for that:

A. Designing a wing stiffness into the supports in order to reduce stiffness especially beyond the FIA load applied during the scrutineering tests. The stiffness curve is designed to be progressively decreasing especially after a load threshold;

B. Letting the rear endplates or the pylon (where the rain light is mounted) bend. This changes the cross-sectional area of all the rear aero parts with the speed;

C. Closing the gap between the main wing and the upper rear flap. By doing this, the air flowing underneath the main wing will suddenly encounter a higher camber with no added energising airflow (through the gap). Therefore, beyond a certain speed, we will see a stall of the rear wing. This means the rear load due to the rear wing will be significantly reduced.

For the front wing, two benefits are pursued by introducing aero flexibility. The front wing provides front load/grip, balance and has an increasingly important role in preparing the airflow for the rear and lower part of the car. Two goals are chased in this area:

1. By lowering both sides of the front wing, the engineers increase the ground-effect, which improves the floor flow;
2. By bending the upper flaps rearwards with the speed, the goal is to stabilise corner entry and improve the flow around the car.

I'd like to share a provocation on this topic to invite F1 not to be too rigid about flexible wings. At the beginning of 2020, the Japanese government became the first to allow OEMs to design cars with no rear view mirrors but using electronic devices instead. Speaking about drag, if you consider the cross-sectional area of a road car, the impact of a rear view mirror is about a 20% reduction.

This implies less energy to move a vehicle. This decision was made possible by the advancement of the vision technology that now allows good resolution levels and adds extra features such as blindspot detection, night vision and so forth.

I strongly believe that today's competence and assets in F1 would be very beneficial for engineering the cars of the future. Surely, the hard work would be on the FIA to regulate materials and new constraints. Let's get creative here and draft some rules:

- only natural fibre composites be allowed for aero appendages;
- a displacement range of a maximum Xmm is allowed between 150km/h (93mph) and 300km/h (186mph);
- beyond 300km/h aero parts need to be fixed.

This application would have a straightforward impact, especially in an automotive world striving for more aero efficiency while it is designing its way out of combustion to fit different forms of propulsion technologies at an earlier stage of their development curve. And what if engineers could find a way to harvest energy from the bodywork movements? I hope the budget cap will never be so tough as to discourage these incredible opportunities for the FIA and F1 to contribute to society. 🌟



It seems hard to believe that 20 years have passed since I met Helio at Rockingham, patiently signing autographs and posing for photos with anyone and everyone

DAVID CUNDELL

So happy for Indy 500 victor Castroneves

Having been a fan of US open-wheel racing since the early 1990s through all its various iterations (CART/IRL/Champ Car/IndyCar), I don't think I've ever been as happy, excited and emotional with a result than I was after the Indianapolis 500 (apart from maybe when Mark Blundell won at Portland in 1997!).

To see Helio Castroneves take victory for the fourth time was such a fantastic result for driver and team, and couldn't be more deserved for one of the nicest guys in motorsport.

It seems hard to believe that 20 years have passed since I met him in the paddock at Rockingham Motor Speedway when CART visited the UK, looking relaxed and smiling, and standing patiently signing autographs and posing, thumbs up, for photographs with anyone and everyone. He was a 'legend' then; he's a true Legend now.

David Cundell
Milton Keynes

Any off-the-wall name suggestions welcome

Montreal has the 'Wall of Champions'; what might we call Turn 15 in Baku? 'Wallies' Wall' sounds a tad harsh and 'Wall of Over-Ambition' is too turgid: any good suggestions out there?

Graeme Innes-Johnstone
Elland, West Yorks

How about a grand prix run in reverse direction?

Now that we have lost the Singapore Grand Prix and a replacement needs to be found and since innovation and experimenting seem to be in favour in F1, how about a double-header where a second race is run in reverse direction? How many tracks are there, if any, that could run a reverse GP? Worth considering?

Douglas Jardine
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VERSTAPPEN BLOWS UP, HAMILTON BLOWS IT

Sergio Perez took advantage of the championship frontrunners' misfortune to seal his first victory for Red Bull after some dramatic closing laps in Baku

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY



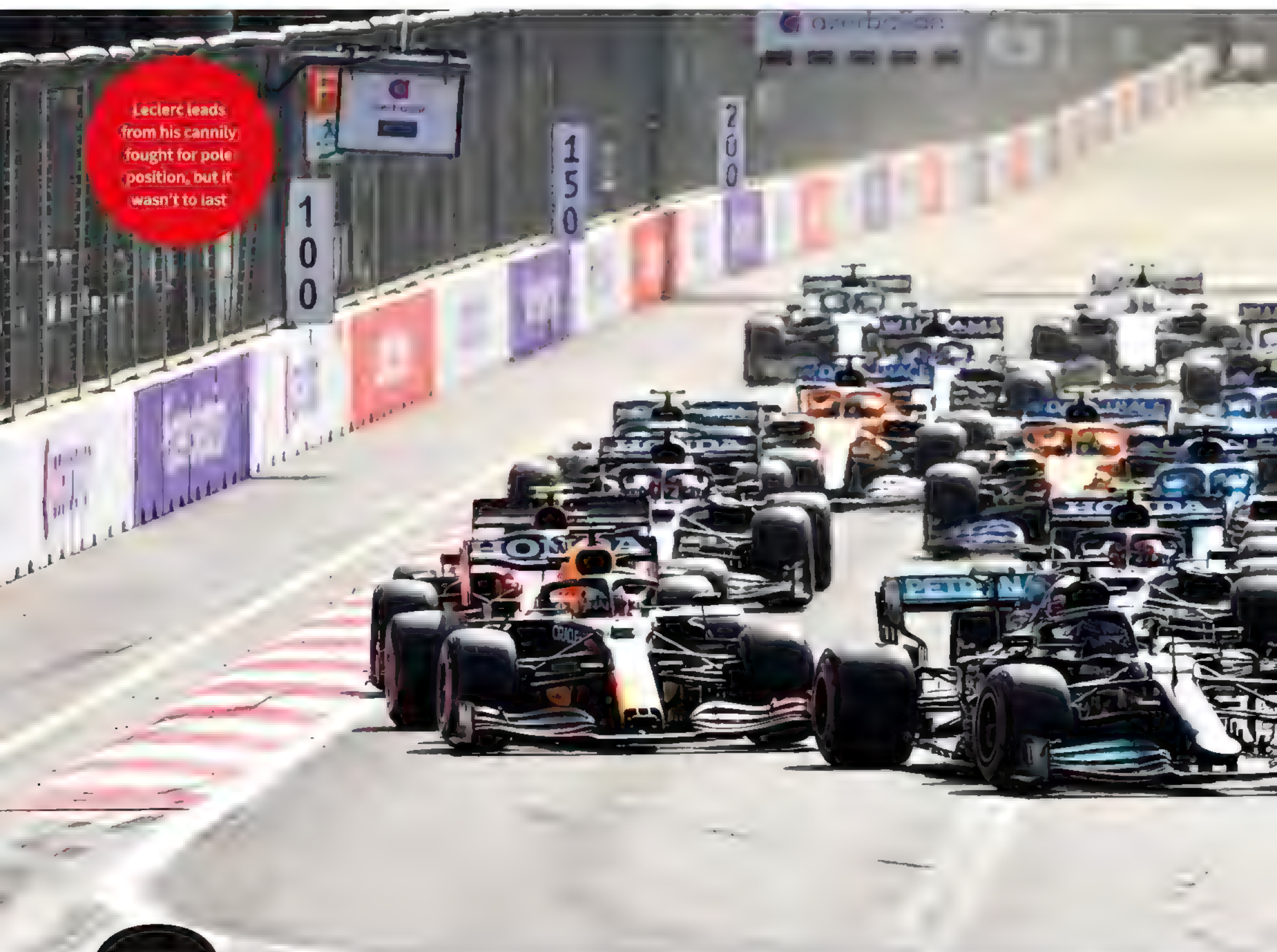
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Verstappen's race terminated by the sudden and dramatic deflation of his left-rear tyre



Leclerc leads from his cannily fought for pole position, but it wasn't to last

C

onsidering all that was to come, the opening lap of the 2021 Azerbaijan Grand Prix was pretty much pure serenity. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc led comfortably away from pole, while Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen slotted in behind, ready to unleash their expected race-pace advantage over their red rival.

Behind the top three by the end of lap one of 51 was eventual race winner Sergio Perez, who'd passed Carlos Sainz Jr and Pierre Gasly to move up from sixth on the grid. The Ferrari was dispatched on the exit of the first corner, when Sainz lost momentum challenging Gasly on the outside line, and Perez's Red Bull then outdragged the AlphaTauri on the outside run down the back straight towards Turn 3.

So far, so normal. But the Baku race ultimately ended with a shocking coda for both the Red Bull and Mercedes squads, and that will forever be how this event is remembered.

To get through to the eventual high drama, first Hamilton and then the Red Bull pair had to pass Leclerc. The world champion had ridden a late FP3 set-up breakthrough to start his Mercedes unexpectedly high up in second, aided by the late Q3 red flag preventing any improvements. And he received another slice of good luck when the pack arrived at the fast, downhill Turn 15 left, where Leclerc and Verstappen had crashed in practice, on lap two.

"There was part of a tree in the middle of Turn 15," explained Leclerc.

"And there I actually lost quite a bit of time." All three leaders took avoiding action, with Leclerc and Verstappen cutting the corner, while Hamilton nipped around the branch and still took the turn. Leclerc was "a bit worried" that he'd gained too much compared to Hamilton by diving off track and so he sportingly slowed. This gave Hamilton all the momentum he needed, the Briton surging past Leclerc on the outside run well ahead of the start/finish line, without DRS.

Leclerc gamely chased Hamilton for four laps, but was "behind Lewis in dirty air, which I struggled [with] a little bit". He hung on but, when Leclerc dropped out of Hamilton's DRS range on lap six, Verstappen seized his chance. The Red Bull got a healthy run on the Ferrari coming down the main straight, and blasted past on the outside line towards Turn 1 to move up behind his title rival.

On the next lap, Perez demoted Leclerc in similar fashion, with the stage now set for another Mercedes versus Red Bull showdown. In the end, we actually got two, with all three long-time race leaders having a chance to win the race that ultimately went to Perez.

VERSTAPPEN'S 'WIN'

From the start of lap seven, just after he'd surged ahead of Leclerc, to the end of what would be Verstappen's last full tour on lap 45, this was what we might consider a 'normal' Formula 1 race.

The Dutchman was chasing his title rival, but possessed the far superior package on the day. As a bonus, for the first time in 2021, he had his team-mate in play, and a chance to strike a real blow to



“SUDDENLY, A FIRST RED BULL 1-2 SINCE THE 2016 MALAYSIAN GP WAS A VERY REAL POSSIBILITY”

Hamilton's championship points tally was on. But first, the two Red Bull drivers had to find their way ahead.

After passing Leclerc, Hamilton had edged out a 0.9-seconds lead over Verstappen by the time they were running 1-2 on the road. During the next few laps, as the drivers in the pack behind peeled off to kickstart the race's main green-flag pitstop phase, with Leclerc coming in on lap nine, the gap began to shrink, having briefly risen to 1.2s.

Hamilton was struggling for rear-tyre life as Verstappen horned in, the leader's pace slipping back to the mid 1m47s, while his Red Bull rivals lapped in the lower end of that bracket or high 1m46s. At the end of lap 11, Mercedes called Hamilton in. And, once again for the Black Arrows squad, it all went wrong in the pits.

Hamilton's switch from the soft to hard tyres was hardly a Monaco or Sakhir GP pitstop disaster, but he was held for approximately two seconds longer than could reasonably be expected in the modern pitstop era. But this wasn't Mercedes' fault, as Gasly was trundling down the pits to make his own switch to the hards, and Hamilton had to be held until the AlphaTauri had passed by.

But this delay may well have been irrelevant. In clean air, Verstappen was flying. His in-lap was a 1m50.389s compared to Hamilton's 1m51.218s. With Mercedes' traditional difficulties in getting the harder compounds into the best operating window at all in 2021, let alone rapidly on an out-lap, the chance was there for a pass even without Hamilton's hold-up. But whatever, the situation played out as it did and Verstappen rejoined in the net lead, with a 3.047s advantage over Hamilton.

Perez had stayed out for another lap. He'd been 1.550s behind Verstappen when he pitted, but like his team-mate he used his time in free air to devastating effect. His in-lap was 1m49.960s, 0.429s better than Verstappen's, but, when Perez arrived for his stop, he made a mistake that might have cost him the chance to take the lead at this stage. "He missed the mark and went a bit deep, and that's why we were a bit slow on the pitstop," Red Bull team boss Christian Horner later said of Perez's 4.3s stationary time, with the left-rear slow to go on as the pitcrew adjusted. "I think without that, he would have been right on top of Max, such was his pace on that in-lap."

The result was that Verstappen ended lap 14 with a 3.157s advantage in the net lead, as Perez nevertheless emerged from the pits in front of Hamilton. Suddenly, a first Red Bull 1-2 since the 2016 Malaysian GP was a very real possibility.

Over the following 16 tours, Verstappen gradually set about building that lead into a substantial 6.841s, edging away from Perez by 0.23s per lap, with Hamilton giving up 0.33s each time in that period. "I was >>



Smoke pours from Hamilton's locked-up front-left tyre as his blunder costs him dearly

“THE RACE ENGINEER HAD ONLY JUST CHECKED IN TO MAKE SURE ALL WAS UNDER CONTROL AND THEN ‘BOOM’”

just initially matching the pace a bit [with] what was happening behind me,” Verstappen later explained. “And then at one point I was three or four tenths faster a lap, while I was not even pushing the tyres, so it all felt really comfortable.”

But on lap 30, the first of two shocking incidents took place, with Lance Stroll's Aston Martin sent spearing into the inside wall on the high-speed approach to the pitlane entry by a sudden left-rear tyre failure. The Canadian was able to climb out unscathed, but was understandably shaken.

A five-lap safety car period followed. Ahead of the restart on lap 36, Verstappen sensibly waited until nearly the last possible moment to hit the gas to return to racing speed, only doing so just as he reached the pitlane entry line. After the Red Bulls had weaved around considerably to try to generate heat in their cooled hards (it was estimated that there would be a two/three-lap period before they switched back on), this gave him a nice buffer over Perez, who had Hamilton putting severe pressure on at what was his only realistic chance to get back ahead at this stage, given he'd fallen to 2.022s behind the second Red Bull before Stroll's tyre let go.

From there, Verstappen looked in complete command, a second successive street race victory set to come. “After the restart,” he said, “I opened up my gap, again to like four seconds, quite comfortable. And it was just basically at that point cruising home without taking risk or anything.”

Verstappen's lead was so comfortable that Red Bull only had to make contact every now and then to remind him of the tailwind gusting into Turns 4/15/16, any worries over the hards wearing

out gone, according to Horner. “The tyre wasn't being abused, the temperatures were all good,” he explained. “The race engineer had basically only just checked in with him to make sure everything was under control and then ‘boom’...”

That succinctly sums up how Verstappen's race ended, but it leaves out the sudden violence of his retirement. At the end of lap 46, his left-rear tyre blew out in similar circumstances to Stroll's, with Verstappen sent spearing the other way — into the barriers on the outside of the track, opposite the pitwall. His RB16B spun around one and a half times, and the safety car was sent out once again. Verstappen climbed from the wreckage and kicked the destroyed tyre.

“It just literally blew up,” he said. “I expect of course [Pirelli] will say it's debris, but we already did quite a few laps and everyone is taking the same line. So, at one point I don't think there is debris anymore. But probably they will blame it on that. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter, these things shouldn't happen.”

Pirelli motorsport boss Mario Isola left Baku believing that debris was indeed the cause of both tyre failures — Hamilton's left-rear hard tyre was also found to have sustained a cut — but stressed that investigations remained preliminary. As the right-rear takes the most load in Baku and the right-front the most wear punishment, this strengthens the debris explanation.

“I believe it was debris, because they didn't have any warning that there was something strange on the car,” he said. “On the suspension, on the tyre, on the brake — nothing was giving any sign of failure. And it was a sudden failure [for both Verstappen and Stroll].”

HAMILTON'S ‘WIN’

Verstappen's tyre had let go with five laps left to run, with the safety car then leading the pack through the pitlane as the grid area was cleared. As the previous clean-up had taken five tours, there was a chance that the race could have ended behind the safety car, but F1 race director Michael Masi assessed the situation “within the timeframe and within the format of the regulations”, and opted



Verstappen's body language silently shouts his dejection after his exit from the race



Vettel executed a brilliant overcut, then used fresher hard rubber to pass Leclerc and Gasly

to throw the red flags. Masi had also received a message from Red Bull sporting director Jonathan Wheatley, who advised that his team had received no warning of Verstappen's tyre failure and suggested that a red flag would allow the drivers to change to fresh tyres given the uncertain situation.

"It was actually already on my mind," Masi said of Wheatley's message. "But we communicate to everyone equally. And, looking with the number of laps that we had to go, the recovery that was being undertaken, and the fact that there was so much debris on the pitstraight, at that point, it was in my opinion, my judgement, the best option to suspend the race. Clean everything up and then have a race finish."

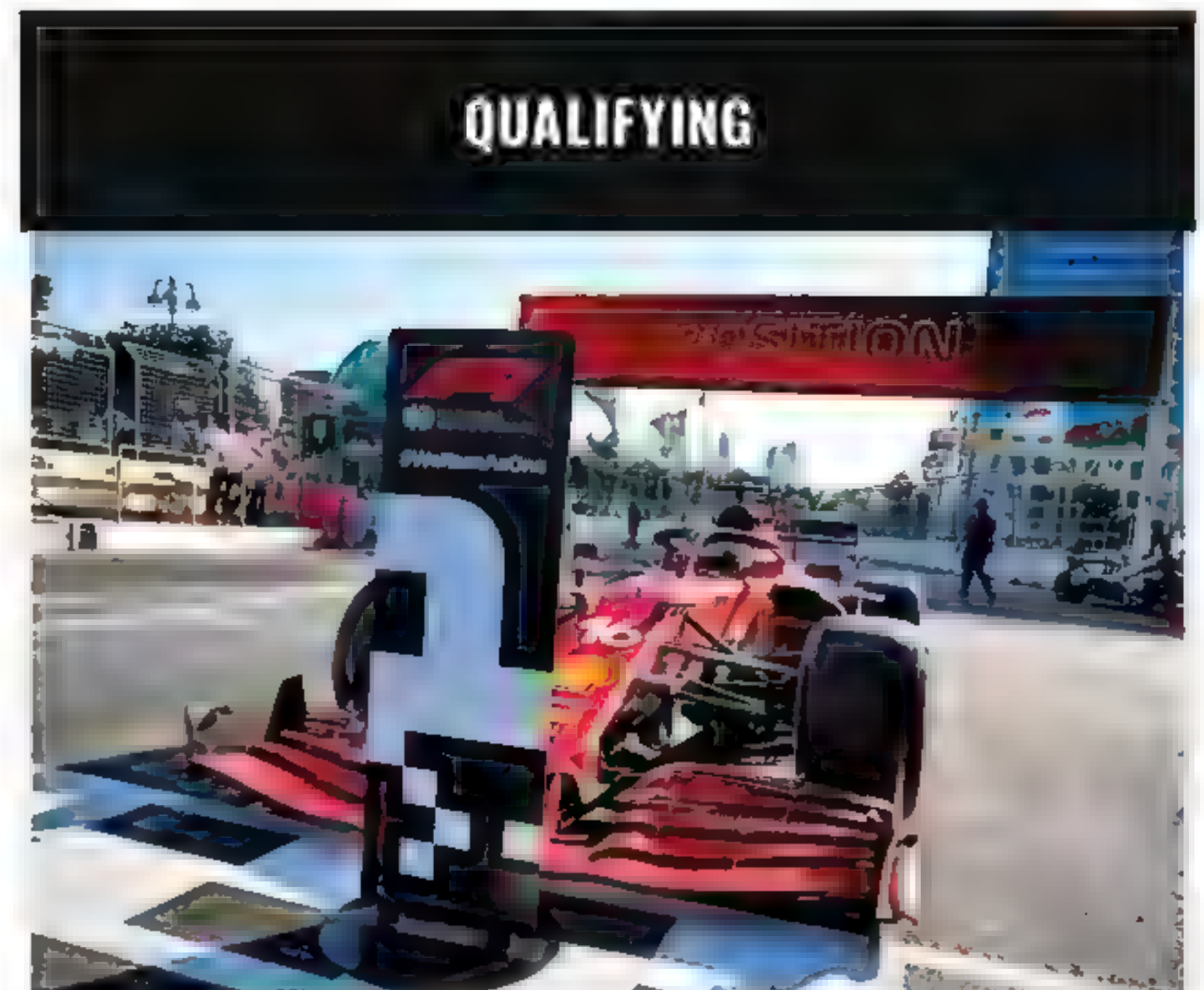
After a 35-minute delay, that's what happened. And it was here that Hamilton staked his victory claim, albeit only for a few seconds.

Red Bull had opted to restart Perez's engine as late as possible, with the field waiting in the pitlane ahead of what would be a second standing start. This was because he'd been gradually losing hydraulic pressure since the safety car restart, and "it was marginal whether he would get to the end of the race" without the red flag, said Horner. This in part explains why he was only 1.475s in front of Hamilton when Verstappen's tyre failed.

Red Bull was also, understandably, so concerned about what had happened to its other car that it instructed Perez "not to weave – I couldn't warm up the tyres at the restart". And so he lined up on 'pole' having completed less-than-ideal preparation, while Hamilton's brakes smoked heavily across the grid.

When the lights went out again, Hamilton simply aced the start. Perez instantly knew "Lewis had a better one", and so chopped across the line. But the Mercedes was irresistibly coming past. The lead, with under two laps remaining, was his once more.

But it only lasted a moment. When Hamilton hit the brakes, his left-front locked heavily and he sailed right past the turn-in point for the left-hander, running deep into the runoff area beyond. At one point, he was turning right as the pack behind went the other way. >>



"I don't feel like we've stolen this pole position." That was Charles Leclerc's assessment in the Baku paddock, shortly after topping qualifying for the second time in two races. His reaction was understandably different compared to Monaco, given the potential heartbreak he faced that did indeed arrive the following day, but the circumstances of the two qualifying sessions were bizarrely similar. Both Q3s were ended early, only in Baku Leclerc wasn't the one in the wall, and Yuki Tsunoda and Carlos Sainz Jr weren't the first to have crashed.

Q1 ended up lasting just over 40 minutes, as Lance Stroll and Antonio Giovinazzi caused separate red flags by striking the barriers at the fast Turn 15 left, the corner heading downhill at the end of the second sector. The Aston Martin hit the wall almost square on and carried on for one more corner before stopping with a broken right-front suspension, while the Alfa Romeo was out immediately.

Q2 was ended 90 seconds early by Daniel Ricciardo, who "probably tried to take a bit too much [speed]", locking up his front-left and sliding into the wall on the outside of Turn 3 – the 90-degree left at the end of the back straight where Tsunoda and Sainz would later halt Q3 with one second left. The AlphaTauri driver "went too late in the braking and went to the wall", while Sainz, just behind, spotted the smoke of Tsunoda's lock-up and then "hit the brake even harder" once he realised there'd been a crash, which looped the Ferrari's rear around, its wing coming off against the runoff wall.

Those were the crashes. They mattered for different reasons. Stroll's incident gave Williams a few more minutes to switch George Russell back to the engine he'd used in Monaco, after his fresh one developed a water pump problem in FP3. He later progressed to Q2 for the sixth time in 2021. Ricciardo's crash prevented any late Q2 improvements, with Sebastian Vettel frustrated to be dumped out in 11th by 0.029s, rueing a lock-up at Turn 15.

Q3's early ending sealed Leclerc's pole. He'd led the way by 0.232s after the first of two expected runs for the shootout competitors. Ferrari had spotted the two Mercedes drivers taking an extra warm-up tour ahead of Leclerc, and picking up a tow from Lewis Hamilton on the run to the line proved to be crucial to his 1m41.218s pole time. All the drivers felt they could have improved on the second, aborted runs but, after everything played out, Leclerc was ahead of Hamilton. Max Verstappen ended up third, feeling he'd had a "bit of a scrappy qualifying", missing a tow on the critical first Q3 run.

"PICKING UP A TOW FROM HAMILTON PROVED TO BE CRUCIAL TO LECLERC'S POLE TIME"



TRACKSIDE VIEW

The Baku Hilton is hosting quite a few sports stars in June 2021. Many of the Formula 1 drivers and team bosses have rooms overlooking the Azerbaijan Grand Prix paddock facilities and the track's first corner.

It's here that Autosport has sauntered down to watch trackside in FP1 and, in the few minutes before the session gets under way, we take in our surroundings. Behind us, a fence blocks a view to the Caspian Sea and Baku's waterside promenade, while in front, tower blocks ring the scene overlooking the 90-degree left-hander. A balcony to our far right has two flags (a Union Jack and a Flag of Wales) tied to its railings – the Welsh football team will be moving into the Hilton once F1 has departed, ahead of its Euro 2020 games against Switzerland and Turkey taking place in Baku. But before Gareth Bale *et al* arrive, the apartment's residents will no doubt be focused on the fortunes of Lewis Hamilton, George Russell and Lando Norris.

Norris provides this Autosport writer – who turned 30 while enjoying FP1's sunny delights, so please forgive our mind wandering to other things, and other sports – with an example of the varying lines to take through Turn 1. Norris is one of the pack that avoids the kerb on the inside and stays notably right, while team-mate



“WHAT REALLY STRIKES US IS HOW TRICKY THE DRIVERS ARE FINDING THE TURN 16 EXIT”

Daniel Ricciardo climbs all over the kerbs, tight left to the wall each time. Max Verstappen is somewhere in the middle of the two lines, whipping his Red Bull through with so much confidence from the off, just kissing the white line.

We wander around Turn 1 to take in the view headlong down the main straight – across the gigantic runoff area, where Sebastian Vettel and Yuki Tsunoda have to turn

around after missing their braking points just past the halfway point and in the final minutes respectively. We note the sensible position of the track's medical centre behind our vantage point, given the speeds the cars arrive here...

As a birthday bonus, although mainly to maximise the recently restored trackside access for journalists in the COVID era, we elect to venture out again in FP3, this time heading to the track's final real corner. It's Turn 16, the 90-degree left that feeds out onto the snaking main 'straight'.

What really strikes us here is how tricky the drivers are finding

the exit. Fernando Alonso and Pierre Gasly are among those spinning their wheels over the kerbs as they filter out right past the apex, while both Aston Martins have moments here in the final minutes. Lance Stroll slides along the length of the exit kerb having carried too much speed through the apex, while Vettel locks his left-front and opts to nip behind the kerb.

As the laps pile up, the Ferrari drivers are struggling the most with rear grip, which reflects their set-up trade-off: less downforce to boost top speed in a bid to overcome the team's enduring power deficit.





Perez survived hydraulic close call to rescue the race for Red Bull

In an instant his very real chance of taking an unfancied win — against a hobbled Perez, and armed with enough power punch to have overtaken Leclerc without DRS over two hours previously — was gone.

And it turned out that Hamilton had experienced “a finger problem”, according to Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. Hamilton sat in his W12 for over two and a half minutes once the race had finished and he’d come home visibly dejected in 15th (he let the Haases run clear on the final lap and crawled back to the pits in silence). There he understood what had happened.

“Did I leave the magic on?” he asked Peter Bonnington, his question concerning the steering wheel toggle that alters brake balance — sending it forwards helps put heat from the brakes into the tyres for grip at race starts and restarts. “I could have sworn I turned that off.”

Hamilton later explained that, while he had indeed reset the switch to get the rear brakes working in line with the fronts ahead of the lights going out, he’d inadvertently reactivated the system as he left the line. “There’s a button we have to help keep the front brakes up, and as Perez pulled over I reacted and accidentally latched on the switch,” he said. “And [I] just locked up going straight because I only had front brakes.”

PEREZ’S ACTUAL WIN

As everything was going wrong for Hamilton, the world champion eventually recording his first finish outside the top 10 since placing 12th in the 2013 Spanish GP, Perez “just tried to brake as late as possible”. “I was like, ‘No way I’m losing this one,’” he added. “Lewis

was on the inside line, the dirty line, and yeah, unfortunate for him.”

As Hamilton exited stage right instead of left, Perez was leading Sebastian Vettel and Gasly to an unlikely podium cast (especially considering that Vettel had started 11th). The Aston Martin driver had been the real leader when Verstappen was in ‘net’ command, as he ran nine laps longer than Leclerc, which he used to overcut Yuki Tsunoda and Fernando Alonso and slot in behind the Ferrari with fresher hard tyres.

This was crucial at the safety car restart, because for Vettel it was “easier to warm them up and it helped me at the restart to jump Charles” — Leclerc had lost momentum challenging Gasly on the outside at the exit of Turn 1, in similar fashion to how his team-mate Sainz had lost out to Perez at the initial start.

On the first run down the main straight after the restart, Vettel got past Gasly too — the Frenchman, who had jumped Leclerc by overcutting for two more tours to lap 11, rued an engine issue that meant he was “losing quite a lot of power down the straights”.

Vettel and Gasly were therefore in position to chase Perez out of Turn 1 on lap 50, with the Red Bull driver running untroubled from there to take a second career win by 1.385s. Vettel was solid in second, while Gasly “took some big risks” to fend off the resurgent Leclerc and the marauding Lando Norris throughout the two-lap shootout.

After celebrating Perez’s first win with his new team — the Mexican had to hitch a lift with the medical car on the in-lap after being ordered to stop his car in the pit exit due to the hydraulic problem, arriving back while Hamilton was still contemplating what had gone wrong at the second start — Horner neatly summarised Red Bull’s rollercoaster race.

“[When] they red-flagged the race, part of you wanted it just to be declared as a result,” he said. “Then, when we got the restart, I thought the only thing that can happen now is that we lose the race and give a chunk of points back to Lewis. But, as it turned out, I’m glad they did do that restart. Checo’s hydraulic pressure stayed intact, Lewis obviously made a mistake at Turn 1.

“We got the race win and Max leaves here in exactly the same position that he arrived. And we’ve extended our lead in the constructors’ championship, and Checo is now up to third in the drivers.” ❄



Perez, Vettel, Gasly podium would have had very long odds pre-race

NEXT F1 REPORT

FRENCH GRAND PRIX 24 JUNE ISSUE

After Lewis Hamilton missed the chance to retake the points lead, can Mercedes tip the balance back in its favour at Paul Ricard?

Norris salvages fifth from tricky weekend

McLaren could consider itself a little fortunate to finish as high as fifth with Lando Norris after the Briton had endured a trying weekend in Azerbaijan.

Norris was shuffled back to ninth on the grid following a penalty for failing to pit immediately during the Antonio Giovinazzi-caused Q1 red flag period, and had a difficult first few turns. He got boxed in and fell to 12th, one place ahead of team-mate Daniel Ricciardo.

The two were stuck together until lap seven, when Ricciardo cleared his team-mate and prompted Norris to make a stop for the hard tyres. The undercut seemed to work well, taking Norris to a net ninth and back ahead of Ricciardo, and also leapfrogging Valtteri Bottas's Mercedes. Bottas put Norris under pressure, but a wide moment at Turn 16 gave Norris more breathing space.

Norris couldn't quite home in on Yuki Tsunoda's AlphaTauri, but was elevated to seventh after Lance Stroll and Max Verstappen both crashed out with tyre failures. At the restart, Norris finally managed to clear Tsunoda, and ended up fifth after Lewis Hamilton ran deep into Turn 1.

Ricciardo, who qualified 13th after his Q2 shunt, was ninth at the time of the red flag. Despite Hamilton's off, he remained there after being overtaken by the fast-restarting Fernando Alonso.



Pirelli: debris to blame for left-rear blowouts

Pirelli believes the left-rear tyre failures that struck Lance Stroll and Max Verstappen in Baku may have been caused by debris on track.

Both Stroll and Verstappen crashed out after suffering tyre blowouts on the main straight in separate incidents, which put Pirelli under scrutiny. Verstappen was cynical in the aftermath of the crash, predicting that Pirelli would pin the failures on debris, and felt that was "a bit hard to accept".

"I wasn't stressing the tyres," said Verstappen. "It felt comfortable and I didn't feel any vibrations before it let go."

Speaking to Autosport after the race, Pirelli F1 chief Mario Isola said the early evidence pointed towards debris being the cause, but explained that a full investigation would follow.

"It was sudden deflation both for Lance and for Max, without any warning," said Isola. "It was on the rear-left tyre that is not the most stressed here, because it's the rear-right. And the most worn tyre is the front-right. So, it is not a matter of wear."

"Another element that is important is

that we found another cut on the rear-left tyre of Lewis Hamilton [during the red flag] — quite a big one. Luckily, this cut was not cutting the construction. And that's why he didn't lose pressure."

The incidents place fresh pressure on Pirelli, which opted to strengthen the constructions of the 2021 tyre compounds to prevent a repeat of the tyre failures that marred the end of last year's British Grand Prix.

Isola said it was "almost impossible to design a tyre that is able to resist any type of debris", but fully understood the drivers' concerns.

"This is not supposed to happen, so I think there needs to be a bit of an investigation," said Aston Martin's Sebastian Vettel. "It's probably the worst place of the year you want to have this. It could go massively wrong, so close to pit entry. We are doing well over 300km/h."

Responding to Pirelli's initial findings, Verstappen's father Jos said "they always say that" and called it a "joke".



BIG NUMBER

157

The number of races since Lewis Hamilton last saw the chequered flag in a position not paying points: the 2013 Spanish Grand Prix, where he fell from second to 12th in his fifth race for Mercedes.



Late-race drama drops Williams behind Haas

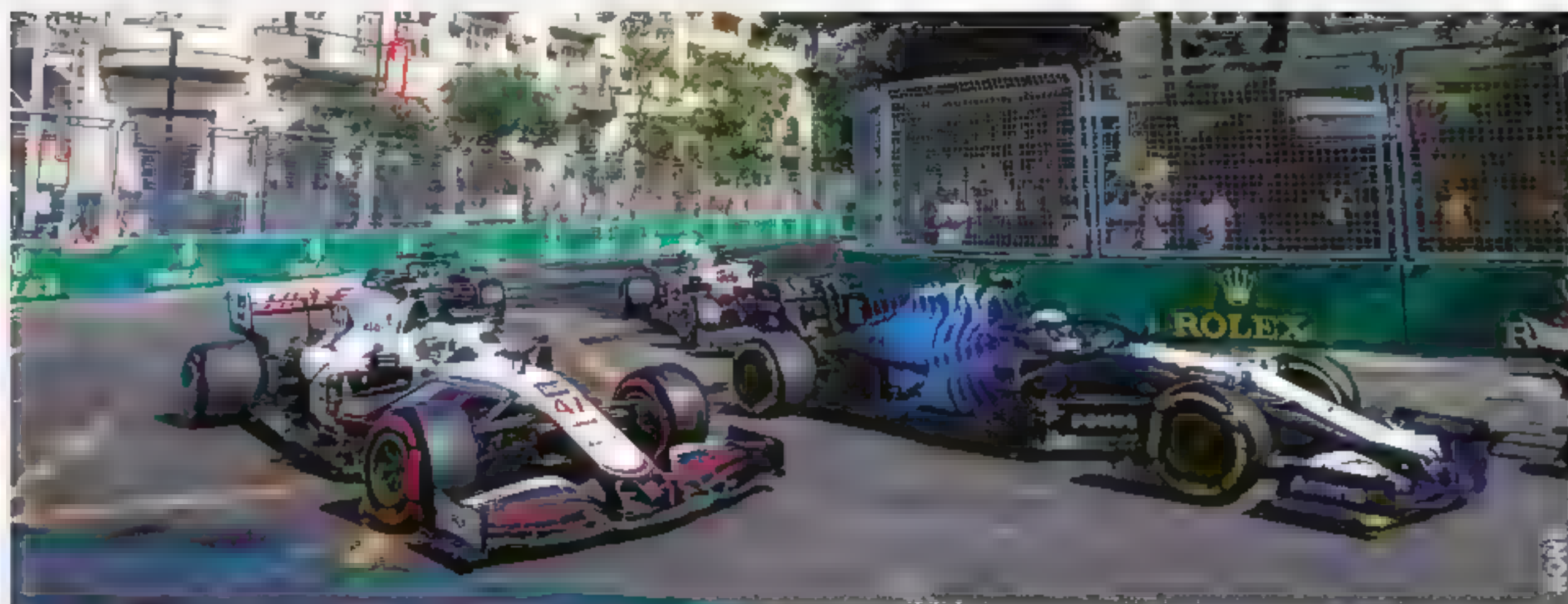
Williams dropped behind Haas in the constructors' championship after late Baku drama hit George Russell and Nicholas Latifi.

Russell sat 14th under the red flag, behind Valtteri Bottas, but a gearbox glitch left him without drive and unable to take the second standing start. He pulled off and stopped in the pitlane.

"We struggled in the first stint, but once we got into the groove and got the tyres under control, the pace was pretty decent for us," said Russell. "It's frustrating to end things in that way."

Latifi lost out after Williams mistakenly told him to stay out on track just before the race was stopped, resulting in a 10-second stop/go penalty (converted to a 30s time penalty at the flag) that dropped him to 16th in the final results. The drivers had been instructed to use the pitlane while the main straight was cleared of Verstappen's crash debris. "I was told to stay out, so I stayed out," Latifi said. "It's just unfortunate, a miscommunication."

Mick Schumacher's 13th for Haas beats the best result achieved by Williams so far in 2021.



Ferrari duo have mixed fortunes

Polesitter Charles Leclerc only managed to lead one lap of the Azerbaijan Grand Prix: keeping the trio of Lewis Hamilton, Max Verstappen and Sergio Perez behind proved impossible.

Leclerc was running fourth after being passed, and elected to pit for hard tyres on lap nine, but was overcut by Pierre Gasly and rejoined behind the AlphaTauri.

Before Lance Stroll's crash, Gasly and Leclerc were being chased by Sebastian Vettel, who was going quickly with fresher tyres, having not pitted until lap 18. Vettel battled past Gasly and Leclerc in quick succession after the safety car restart, leaving the Ferrari in sixth.

But Leclerc had renewed vigour following the red flag, with only two laps to earn a potential podium, and he initially got past Gasly at the start of the last lap before the Frenchman switched back and dived down the inside of Turn 1. The pair fought hard, but Leclerc could not pass and had to settle for fourth.

Carlos Sainz Jr's day was more difficult. He was among the top six prior to the first round of stops, but braked too deep into Turn 8 on cold tyres on his out-lap, which sent his Ferrari down the escape road and tumbling down the order, falling as low as 15th. He tried to get past Yuki Tsunoda after the final restart, when Tsunoda lost out to Lando Norris and Fernando Alonso, but was beaten to seventh place by the AlphaTauri driver.

Q&A

FERNANDO ALONSO ALPINE DRIVER



How did you enjoy the short race to the finish?

We need to think about many two-lap races, 25 two-lap races or something like that on the Sunday! It was fun, people were being very aggressive on those two laps knowing that you don't need to take care of the tyres or anything. That was fun. I think the weekend was very solid for us. Tenth, which was our position in the race [before the red flag], was too little reward for the weekend we have done, so I am happy with sixth because I think the team deserved it.

Do you feel the early undercut at the first stops worked?

We tried to be creative with the strategy, undercutting and

taking the opportunity on the first safety car, but we missed three or four tenths on pace and that was a killer for any strategy. So, we need to review that to make some improvements for the next one, but I'm happy with today. Let's think for the following race.

Why did you try to gamble on softs under the safety car?

We lacked pace, I think that was the truth behind everything. We were a little bit slower than expected in the race pace, so first we tried to undercut very

early on the first stop. It didn't pay off too much, then it was a safety car and we tried to put on the soft, so we were trying just different things because in pure pace we were not there.

Did it help you having those softs for the restart?

No, I don't think so. Honestly, I gained one or two places at Turn 1 and that's [because of] how the car started today – [it] was very good. And then [I gained] another two places again because there was fighting between Turn 3 and Turn 5 – [Yuki] Tsunoda and one of the McLarens [Lando Norris]. So, because of those fights I was gaining another two [places]. I don't think the feeling of the soft was anything important on this.

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DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA

RED BULL'S SOLUTION TO THE BAKU CONUNDRUM...

The Baku City Circuit poses a perennial problem to the Formula 1 aerodynamicists; the two-kilometre straight would usually require the use of skinny wings to find more top speed on the run to the first corner, but the slow middle sector means the car needs more rear traction to work. It's a bit of a conundrum as the car almost needs two different downforce settings in one race.

The best-of-both-worlds solution is to run a curved rear wing, featuring the deeper centre but with the outboard part of the mainplane turned upwards to reduce the overall wing camber. After all, the centre of the wing is the most efficient part in terms of downforce production, while the outboard ends produce less downforce relative to the drag produced, so they can be turned down.

Red Bull ran a wing with the upturned mainplane, but experimented in practice with a trimmed-back upper flap. Here, the trailing edge (inset) sloped downwards towards the endplate to limit drag further, but presumably this didn't

provide the RB16B with enough of a balance between the slow and fast parts of the Azerbaijan circuit. The team also ditched its slotted endplates to limit the drag further,

and this proved to be the right call as the team was quick on the straights but possessed great traction in the middle of the course.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



TRIMMED-BACK UPPER FLAP WAS TRIED IN PRACTICE

...AND MERCEDES/FERRARI ALTERNATIVES

Ferrari and Mercedes ran it a little bit differently. The Italian team tried a curved mainplane in practice, but opted to go for a skinnier rear-wing formation to try to dial in more straightline speed. The SF21 has been very good in the low-speed corners, as shown by its Monaco GP performance, and thus it seems that the team felt that it could sacrifice a little bit of speed in that area to find more on the straights. Evidently, the plan worked in qualifying, and Charles Leclerc assumed his second

consecutive pole, but the race was a little more difficult; high degradation proved to be a bugbear Ferrari could not shake.

Mercedes opted for higher-downforce wings as it already had good straightline speed, but a tricky weekend for the team meant it was chasing its tail. It eventually opted to split rear-wing strategies: Lewis Hamilton took the marginally lower-downforce wing with the single mounting pillar; Valtteri Bottas went a grade higher and took the twin-mounted,

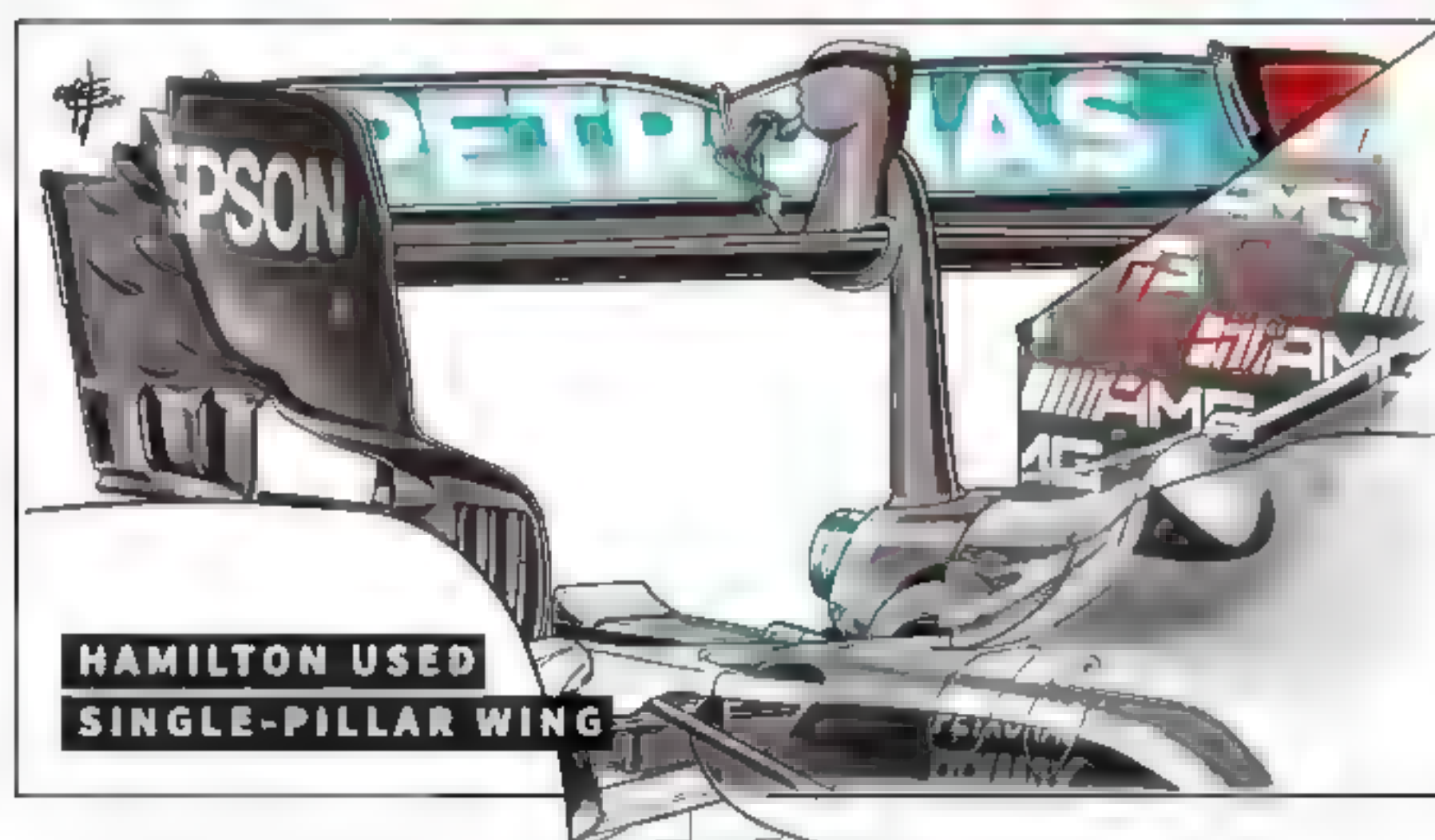


SKINNIER FORMATION PAID OFF FOR FERRARI, AT LEAST IN QUALIFYING

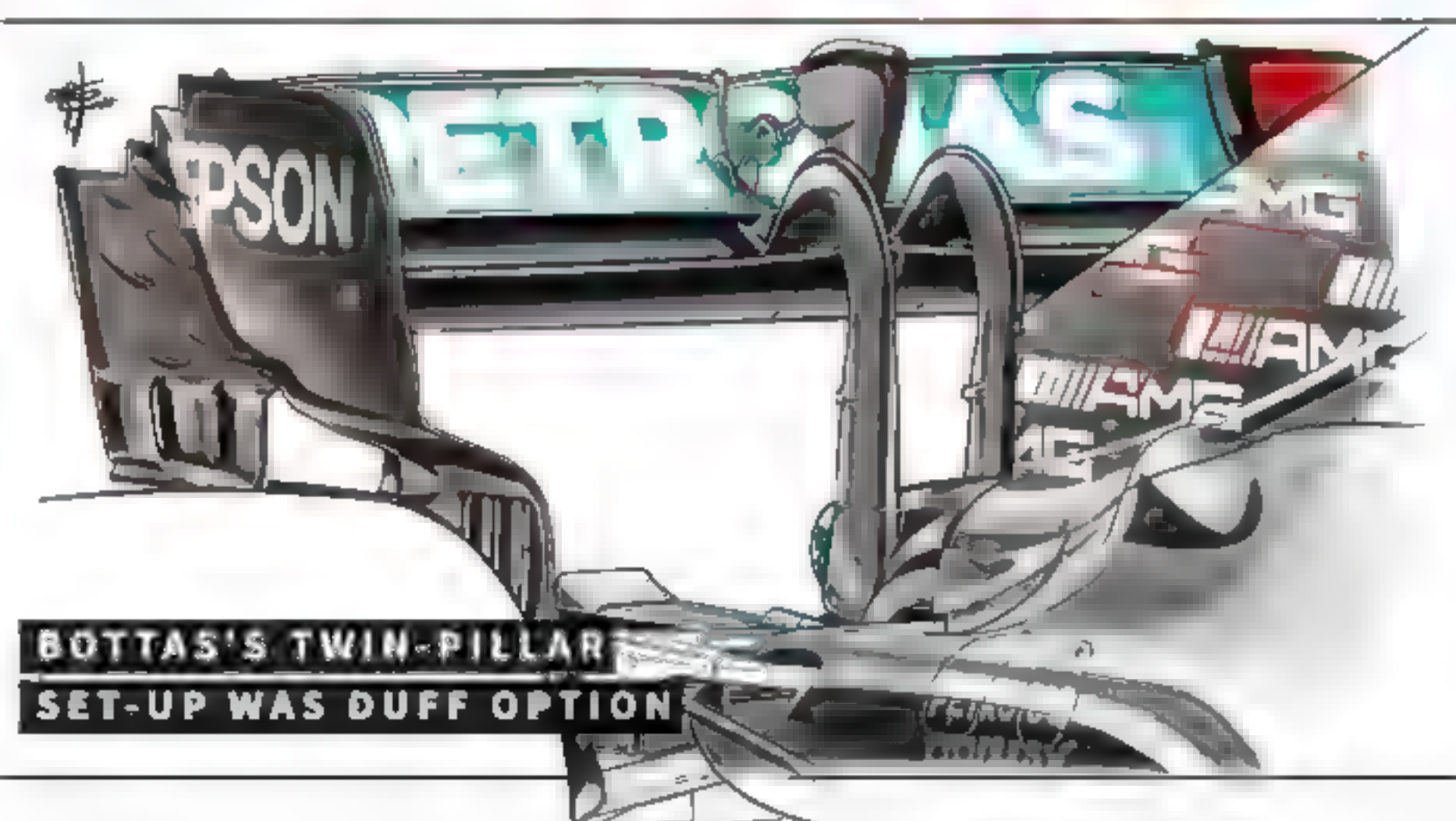
deeper rear wing. Although Hamilton fought his way back into contention (before an errant button press undid all his work

at the standing restart), team boss Toto Wolff said that Bottas's car was "nowhere".

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



HAMILTON USED SINGLE-PILLAR WING

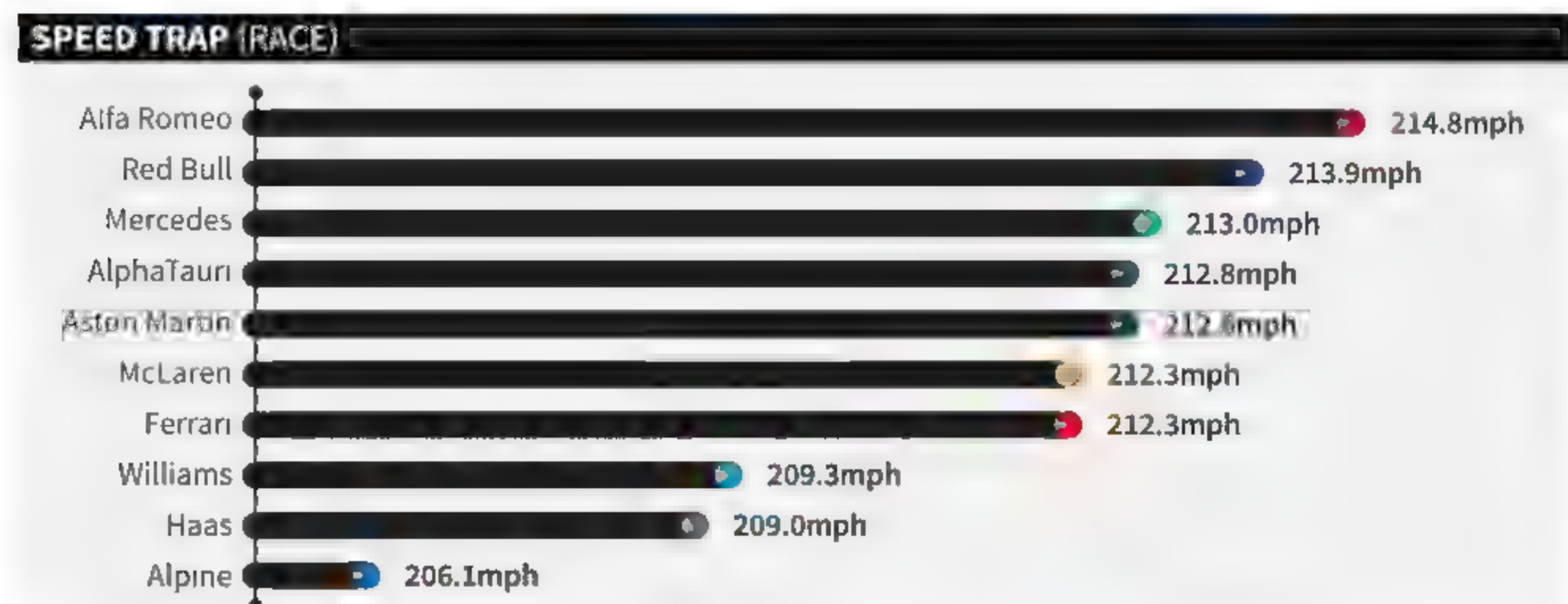


BOTTAS'S TWIN-PILLAR SET-UP WAS DUFF OPTION

	19 Stroll #18 no Q1 time		17 Schumacher #47 1m44.158s		15 Russell #63 1m42.758s		13 Ricciardo #3 1m42.558s		11 Vettel #5 1m42.224s
	20 Giovinazzi #99 no Q1 time		18 Mazepin #9 1m44.238s		16 Latifi #6 1m43.128s		14 Raikkonen #7 1m42.587s		12 Ocon #31 1m42.273s

FREE PRACTICE 1			FREE PRACTICE 2			FREE PRACTICE 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m43.184s	1	Perez	1m42.115s	1	Gasly	1m42.251s
2	Leclerc	1m43.227s	2	Verstappen	1m42.216s	2	Perez	1m42.595s
3	Sainz	1m43.521s	3	Sainz	1m42.243s	3	Hamilton	1m42.697s
4	Perez	1m43.630s	4	Leclerc	1m42.436s	4	Leclerc	1m42.778s
5	Ricciardo	1m43.732s	5	Gasly	1m42.534s	5	Sainz	1m43.006s
6	Gasly	1m43.757s	6	Alonso	1m42.693s	6	Norris	1m43.011s
7	Hamilton	1m43.893s	7	Giovinazzi	1m42.941s	7	Alonso	1m43.080s
8	Norris	1m43.996s	8	Norris	1m43.018s	8	Tsunoda	1m43.244s
9	Alonso	1m44.777s	9	Ocon	1m43.020s	9	Ocon	1m43.294s
10	Bottas	1m44.891s	10	Tsunoda	1m43.130s	10	Ricciardo	1m43.557s
11	Raikkonen	1m44.943s	11	Hamilton	1m43.156s	11	Vettel	1m43.585s
12	Giovinazzi	1m45.092s	12	Raikkonen	1m43.220s	12	Stroll	1m43.682s
13	Stroll	1m45.234s	13	Ricciardo	1m43.298s	13	Bottas	1m43.745s
14	Tsunoda	1m45.384s	14	Stroll	1m43.812s	14	Raikkonen	1m43.826s
15	Vettel	1m45.415s	15	Vettel	1m43.881s	15	Verstappen	1m43.984s
16	Ocon	1m45.446s	16	Bottas	1m44.184s	16	Latifi	1m44.054s
17	Russell	1m45.452s	17	Russell	1m44.557s	17	Giovinazzi	1m44.113s
18	Latifi	1m45.774s	18	Mazepin	1m45.563s	18	Russell	1m44.434s
19	Schumacher	1m46.899s	19	Schumacher	1m46.095s	19	Schumacher	1m45.282s
20	Mazepin	1m46.945s	20	Latifi	1m46.983s	20	Mazepin	1m45.711s

WEATHER Sunny, air 25-27C track 48-51C WEATHER Sunny, air 26-28C track 44-49C WEATHER Sunny, air 27-28C track 54-56C



QUALIFYING 1			QUALIFYING 2			QUALIFYING 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m41.545s	1	Verstappen	1m41.625s	1	Leclerc	1m41.218s
2	Verstappen	1m41.760s	2	Perez	1m41.630s	2	Hamilton	1m41.450s
3	Perez	1m41.968s	3	Hamilton	1m41.634s	3	Verstappen	1m41.563s
4	Sainz	1m42.121s	4	Tsunoda	1m41.654s	4	Gasly	1m41.565s
5	Norris	1m42.167s	5	Leclerc	1m41.659s	5	Sainz	1m41.576s
6	Leclerc	1m42.241s	6	Sainz	1m41.740s	6	Norris	1m41.747s
7	Gasly	1m42.288s	7	Norris	1m41.813s	7	Perez	1m41.917s
8	Ricciardo	1m42.304s	8	Gasly	1m41.932s	8	Tsunoda	1m42.211s
9	Ocon	1m42.426s	9	Bottas	1m42.106s	9	Alonso	1m42.327s
10	Vettel	1m42.460s	10	Alonso	1m42.195s	10	Bottas	1m42.659s
11	Tsunoda	1m42.521s	11	Vettel	1m42.224s			
12	Bottas	1m42.701s	12	Ocon	1m42.273s			
13	Russell	1m42.728s	13	Ricciardo	1m42.558s			
14	Raikkonen	1m42.923s	14	Raikkonen	1m42.587s			
15	Alonso	1m42.934s	15	Russell	1m42.758s			
16	Latifi	1m43.128s						
17	Schumacher	1m44.158s						
18	Mazepin	1m44.238s						
19	Stroll	no time						
20	Giovinazzi	no time						

WEATHER Sunny, air 25-26C track 43-49C



SEASON STATS

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1 Verstappen	105	1	1
2 Hamilton	101	1	1
3 Perez	69	1	2
4 Norris	66	3	5
5 Leclerc	52	4	1
6 Bottas	47	3	1
7 Sainz	42	2	4
8 Gasly	31	3	4
9 Vettel	28	2	8
10 Ricciardo	26	6	6
11 Alonso	13	6	9
12 Ocon	12	7	5
13 Stroll	9	8	10
14 Tsunoda	8	7	8
15 Raikkonen	1	10	14
16 Giovinazzi	1	10	10
17 Schumacher	0	13	17
18 Russell	0	14	11
19 Mazepin	0	14	18
20 Latifi	0	15	14

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Red Bull	174
2 Mercedes	148
3 Ferrari	94
4 McLaren	31
5 AlphaTauri	39
6 Aston Martin	37
7 Alpine	25
8 Alfa Romeo	2
9 Haas	0
10 Williams	0

QUALIFYING BATTLE

Hamilton	4	2 Bottas
Perez	1	5 Verstappen
Ricciardo	3	3 Norris
Vettel	3	3 Stroll
Alonso	2	4 Ocon
Leclerc	5	1 Sainz
Gasly	6	0 Tsunoda
Raikkonen	2	4 Giovinazzi
Mazepin	1	5 Schumacher
Latifi	0	6 Russell

Scores ignore sessions if a driver didn't participate in qualifying or had a serious technical problem

WINS

Hamilton	3	Hamilton	2
Verstappen	2	Leclerc	2
Perez	1	Bottas	1
		Verstappen	1

FASTEST LAPS

Bottas	2
Hamilton	2
Verstappen	2

STARTING GRID

 10 Bottas #77 1m42.659s	 9 Norris #4 1m41.747s	 8 Alonso #14 1m42.327s	 7 Tsunoda #22 1m42.211s	 6 Perez #11 1m41.917s	 5 Sainz #55 1m41.576s	 4 Gasly #10 1m41.565s	 3 Verstappen #33 1m41.563s	 2 Hamilton #44 1m41.450s	 1 Leclerc #16 1m41.218s
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RACE RESULTS ROUND 6/23 (51 LAPS - 190.18 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISHTIME	LED	TYRES
1	Sergio Perez (MEX)	Red Bull-Honda	2h13m36.410s	8	Su, Hn, Su
2	Sebastian Vettel (DEU)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+1.385s	4	Sn, Hn, Su
3	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Honda	+2.762s		Su, Hn, Su
4	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	+3.828s	1	Su, Hn, Su
5	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Mercedes	+4.754s		Su, Hn, Su
6	Fernando Alonso (ESP)	Alpine-Renault	+6.382s		Su, Hn, Su, Su
7	Yuki Tsunoda (JPN)	AlphaTauri-Honda	+6.624s		Su, Hn, Su
8	Carlos Sainz Jr (ESP)	Ferrari	+7.709s		Su, Hn, Su
9	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	McLaren-Mercedes	+8.874s		Sn, Hn, Su
10	Kimi Raikkonen (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+9.576s		Mn, Hn, Sn
11	Antonio Giovinazzi (ITA)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+10.254s		Sn, Hn, Hn, Sn
12	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Mercedes	+11.264s		Su, Hn, Su
13	Mick Schumacher (DEU)	Haas-Ferrari	+14.241s		Sn, Hn, Su, Su, Su
14	Nikita Mazepin (RUS)	Haas-Ferrari	+14.315s		Sn, Hn, Su, Su, Su
15	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	+17.668s	9	Su, Hn, Su
16	Nicholas Latifi (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	+42.379s		Mn, Hn, Sn
17	George Russell (GBR)	Williams-Mercedes	48 laps-gearbox		Mn, Hn, Hn, Sn
18	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda	45 laps-tyre blowout	29	Su, Hn
R	Lance Stroll (CAN)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	29 laps-tyre blowout		Hn
R	Esteban Ocon (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	3 laps-engine		Sn

FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Verstappen	1m44.481s	-	44
2	Perez	1m44.687s	+0.206s	45
3	Hamilton	1m44.769s	+0.288s	43
4	Vettel	1m44.890s	+0.409s	41
5	Tsunoda	1m44.939s	+0.458s	46
6	Gasly	1m45.220s	+0.739s	44
7	Norris	1m45.326s	+0.845s	41
8	Leclerc	1m45.382s	+0.901s	46
9	Giovinazzi	1m45.575s	+1.094s	44
10	Raikkonen	1m45.601s	+1.120s	43
11	Alonso	1m45.624s	+1.143s	42
12	Bottas	1m45.665s	+1.184s	43
13	Sainz	1m45.700s	+1.219s	42
14	Ricciardo	1m45.713s	+1.232s	43
15	Russell	1m45.959s	+1.478s	43
16	Stroll	1m46.207s	+1.726s	28
17	Latifi	1m46.608s	+2.127s	42
18	Schumacher	1m47.624s	+3.143s	41
19	Mazepin	1m47.747s	+3.266s	40
20	Ocon	1m50.850s	+6.369s	2

WEATHER Overcast then sunny, air 22-25C track 33-42C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 85.41mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 128.53mph

TYRES

KEY: H - Hard M - Medium S - Soft I - Intermediate W - Wet n - New set u - Used set



RACE BRIEFING

GRID PENALTIES

NORRIS Three-place penalty and three licence points for continuing on track during red flag period

RACE PENALTIES

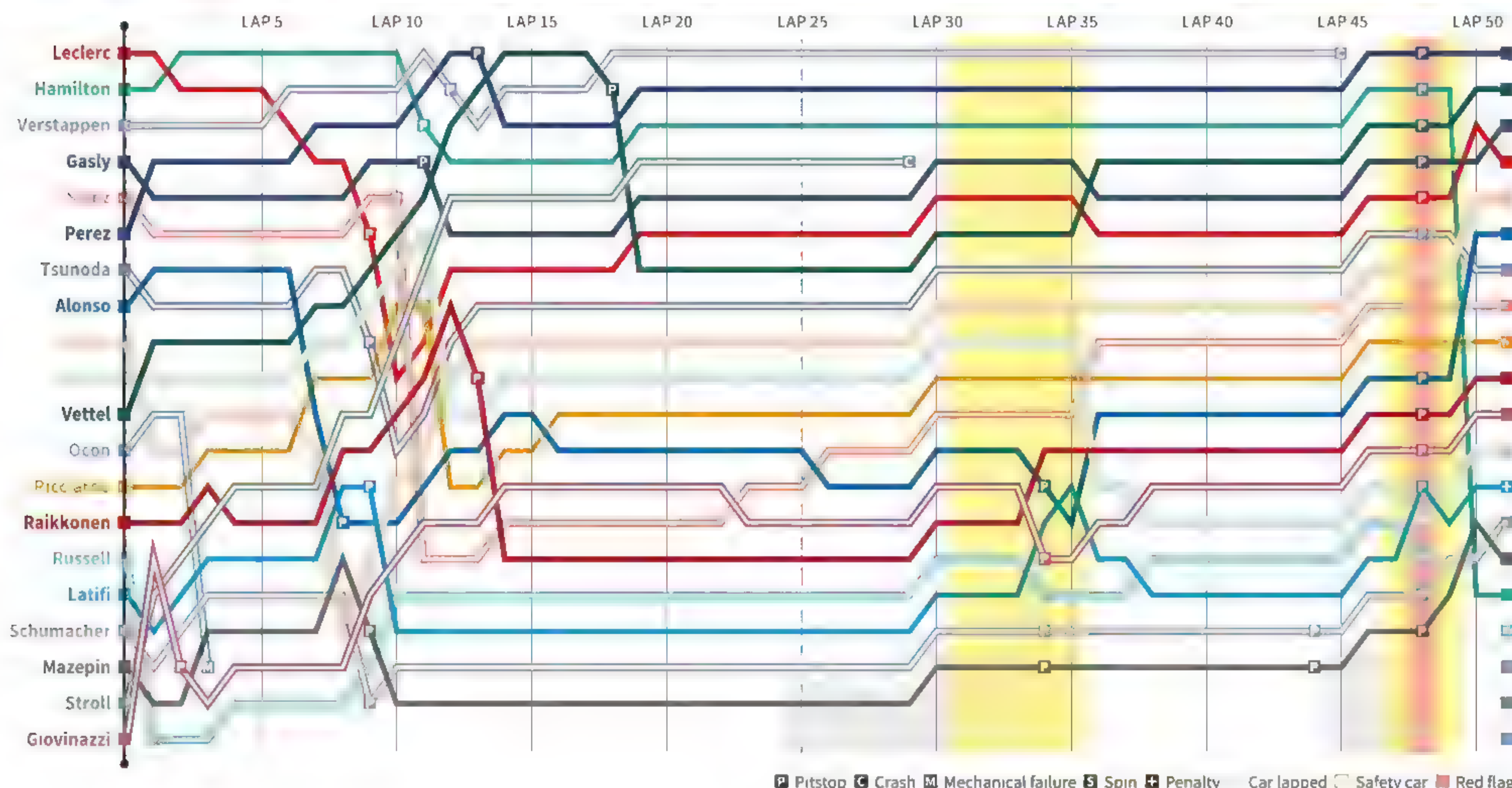
LATIFI 30s penalty and three licence points for failing to enter pitlane during safety car period

STAT

9

Leclerc's ninth world championship F1 pole puts him one ahead of Ferrari's 1964 world champion John Surtees

LAP CHART What happened, when



P Pitstop C Crash M Mechanical failure S Spin + Penalty L Car lapped SC Safety car RF Red flag

LAST-GASP PODIUM DEFENCE HELPS GASLY GRAB TOP SCORE

After a strong performance in qualifying, the AlphaTauri driver coped with frustrating engine issues to take a stirring, and starring, third-place finish

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

MERCEDES



Started 2nd – Result 15th

5 Was on for 10 out of 10 – then he hit the brakes after the restart... Did superbly to take second in qualifying and lead early stages. Third behind the Red Bulls would still have been great, but knocking his brake bias out when changing gear passing Perez cost him at least 18 points.



Started 10th – Result 12th

2 Couldn't understand why he was at the limit but not showing any pace. His score is mainly down to shocking race pace when Hamilton nearly won. Struggled badly with tyre warm-up post-safety car, slipping to 14th and needing others' misfortune to gain back places.

RED BULL



Started 6th — Result 1st

8 Very close to a nine given how things played out, but score is mainly down to his mistake in locking up at Turn 4 on the first, critical, runs in Q3. This meant he qualified behind three slower cars. Overtook superbly on lap one and drove brilliantly from there, other than a slip at his pitstop.



Started 3rd – Result 18th

9 A "scrappy" Q3 first run behind Perez, presumably to get a tow, denies him 10 out of 10, especially when added to his FP3 crash. In the race he was faultless, picked his battles well and let his pace do the rest. Deserved victory, but was robbed by the tyre failure no one at Red Bull saw coming.

McLAREN



Started 13th – Result 9th

5 Another difficult weekend. His Q2 crash really hurts his score as he just tried going too fast through Turn 3. In the race he largely chased Bottas before Sainz jumped them both after the safety car, with Ricciardo then nursing a flatspot before the red flag. Couldn't gain ground at the second start.



Started 9th — Result 5th

7 Qualifying red-flag penalty is a consideration given it cost him three places, but he had little time to react. Score mainly brought down for picking the middle line at the initial start and then being too hesitant at Turn 2, two decisions that cost him three places. Battled back well from there.

ASTON MARTIN



Started 11th – Result 2nd

9 Q2 exit costs the maximum, despite excellent race drive. Huge lock-up at Turn 15 was what he was actually livid about rather than the 0.029s deficit to 10th when Q2 ended early. In the race, he executed a brilliant overcut to gain two spots, then used the fresher rubber to pass Leclerc and Gasly.



Started 19th — Result R

6 Gets benefit of the doubt for an extra mark given his alternately arranged one-stop race was cruelly taken away in the first of two shocking tyre failures. Is judged primarily on his Q1 crash, which he put down to pushing too hard. That was unfortunate given the Aston had the pace to make Q3.

ALPINE



Started 8th — Result 6th

8 Needed the luck that the red-flag period provided, but second start was brilliant. Was shuffled out of the top 10 early on after making an aggressively early stop for hards, having moved up at the start. Then he gambled on softs under the safety car, which he used nicely at the final start.



Started 12th — Result R

6 Paid the price for striking the wall exiting Turn 3 on his second run in Q2. That left him vulnerable to the segment-ending red flag when another improvement was possible and he felt he had the pace to join Alonso in the top 10 shootout. Lost power on the fourth lap and had to retire.

FERRARI



Started 1st — Result 4th

8 Comes close to a nine after clinching another unusual pole, showing that it pays to be on it from the off, and was smart to push to catch Hamilton's tow. Paid the price for being too sporting after avoiding the branch, and was then overcut by Gasly as he struggled after stopping for hard tyres.



Started 5th — Result 8th

6 Wasn't at fault for Q3 crash. Score is mainly down to out-lap trip down the Turn 8 escape road, as locking new, cold hards cost him dearly. Also struggled with locking at the restart, but passed Alonso nicely in the middle phase and was brave gaining two spots at the safety car restart.



ALPHATAURI



Started 4th — Result 3rd

10 Gasly did an excellent job to equal his best grid spot. Was never likely to keep Perez behind in the race, and was unfortunate that the power problem was already having an impact when Vettel attacked. Brilliantly fended off Leclerc late on to cling onto third.



Started 7th — Result 7th

7 Can't score higher because of Q3 crash. Still, making Q3 for first time in 2021 on a very tricky track was impressive. Fell behind Alonso at first start but was hanging onto eighth nicely, which became sixth after the blowouts. Was outgunned by Norris and Alonso after the second start.

ALFA ROMEO



Started 14th — Result 10th

9 Was top 'Class C' runner in qualifying, and was then given an alternate starting strategy with a set of medium tyres. Stayed out until lap 13, but that actually meant he ended up being undercut by his early-stopping team-mate. Holding his own at the second start netted a point.



Started 20th — Result 11th

7 Earns this score mainly for Q1 crash, which meant he started last. Still, rather made amends by making up five spots in opening three corners. Stopped early and jumped ahead of his team-mate, then fell back behind with a safety car stop for fresh hards before getting ahead of Bottas.

HAAS



Started 18th — Result 14th

2 Haas saying the final-straight shenanigans were down to a "misunderstanding" doesn't change how dangerous the jink right was. Brings his score down one, but it was already awful given his qualifying defeat and being 22s behind Schumacher by the time of his lap 24 escape-road trip.



Started 17th — Result 13th

7 In qualifying and the race to the safety car things were going well. Was unfortunate at his safety car stop, with his front-left not going on properly. Bizarrely lifted off approaching Turn 3 after second start, slipping behind his team-mate and then being incensed by their late near-plane-crash.

WILLIAMS



Started 16th — Result 16th

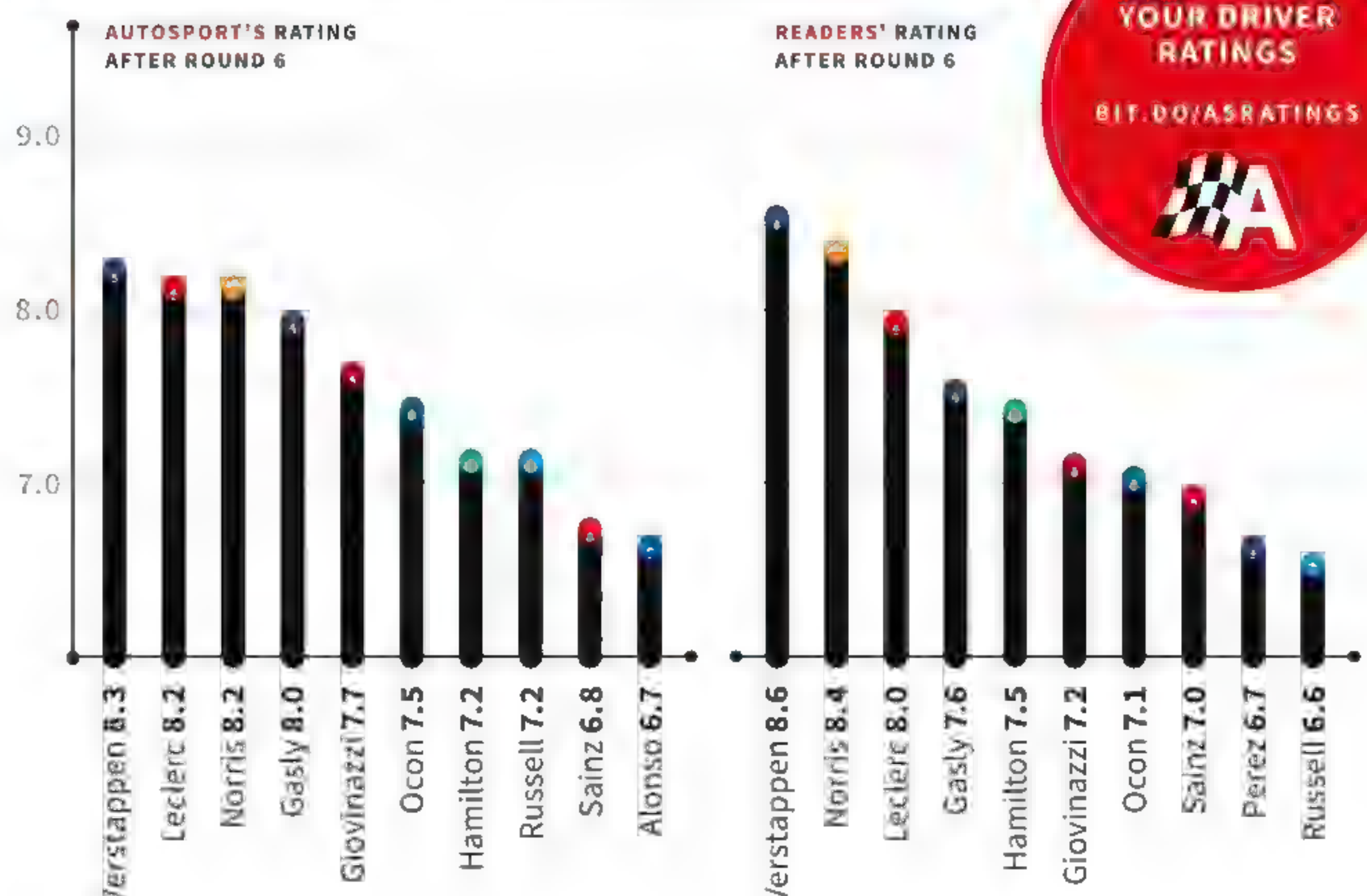
6 Was again defeated by Russell in qualifying. Didn't come in under the safety car so gained spots, but soon fell back after the restart. Isn't judged too harshly here for the second safety car not-pitting penalty, as the team instruction was far too easily misconstrued.



Started 15th — Result 17th

7 Extended his 2021 Q2 appearance streak, but might not have done had the two Q1 crashers made it through. Pitted at the end of lap one in a strategic gamble to run in clean air on the hards, but couldn't find the required pace. Gearbox issue ahead of the second start put him out.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS



THE END OF AN ERA

The curtain comes down on the hybrid era at this year's
Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

YAS ISLAND - ABU DHABI

Yas Marina Circuit

10th - 12th December 2021

Formula 1 racing is set for major changes in 2022. Sweeping regulation changes will come in that are designed for closer racing, more action, and create a tighter field. But the changes will come as the 2021 season looks to be one of the most exciting in recent memory.

Since the hybrid era began in 2014, there has been one team at the top. Mercedes has won the last seven consecutive championships, with Lewis Hamilton winning all but one. But 2021 is already building towards an epic send-off for the hybrid machines.

Max Verstappen looks as fast as it's ever been, the Red Bulls look to take the title challenge to the Silver Arrows for the first time since their last championship in 2013. As the season moves on, neither Hamilton nor Verstappen look like they're going to take their foot off the gas as the season goes down to the wire.

And all signs are pointing to an epic season finale in Abu Dhabi. The Yas Marina circuit has been the site of some epic title-deciding races of the past – including Red Bull and Mercedes' maiden championships.

It's a fitting setting for the final race, as the incredible Yas Marina circuit tests the drivers who will require the upmost skill and bravery to make key overtakes. Only the victor will be spinning donuts under the bright lights before lifting the winners' trophy.

With the race taking place in mid-December, fans will be able to witness not just the final race of the era, but what might be an era-defining battle between two greats. Tickets are now on sale for premium hospitality packages which not only get you closer to the grid, with priceless views of the chequered flag moment, but the opportunity to get the inside line from teams.



Aerial view of the Yas Marina Circuit. A key feature of the Yas Marina Circuit.

Yas Island - Abu Dhabi

EPIC FINALES AT ABU DHABI

2010

The duel in the desert saw four drivers – Lewis Hamilton, Sebastian Vettel, Fernando Alonso and Mark Webber – all with a shot at the championship at the final race. It was Vettel who prevailed with Red Bull, and became the youngest ever world champion.

2011

Having won the first two Abu Dhabi races, it looked a dead cert that the pole man and newly-crowned double world champion Vettel would walk away with another win. But a puncture saw him out before turn 3, and Lewis Hamilton held off Alonso for the win.

2014

Double points were on offer for the first and only time ever as Nico Rosberg chased down teammate Lewis Hamilton for the title. The German put it on pole, but Lewis led the first lap, and mechanical issues for Rosberg means Hamilton was crowned a double-champ.

2016

The Silver Arrows were back at it again, but this time Rosberg had the upper hand. Hamilton led from pole, and would slow his pace to allow other drivers to catch his rival, but it was Rosberg who took 2nd and the title.

2020

The end of a Mercedes-dominated season saw Max Verstappen and Red Bull lay down the gauntlet. Mercedes had won every Abu Dhabi race of the hybrid era, but Verstappen's pole and win proved there was plenty to come in 2021.



Max Verstappen winner of the 2020 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix
Yas Island - Abu Dhabi

SEE THE RACE IN STYLE

Check out the array of hospitality options, including team-specific packages, available for the race.

Formula 1 Paddock Club

The premium way to watch F1 in style. Paddock Club experiences, and includes a prime viewing spot above the pit building, open bar with champagne, gourmet luncheon, truck tour of the circuit and more to take fans closer to the action.*

Red Bull Racing Paddock Club

It could be a crowning moment for Max Verstappen and Red Bull Racing. The team allow fans to get closer to the garage with exclusive Live Pit Links with the garage as the car is being prepared, plus exclusive interviews with the team and a Red Bull goody bag.*

McLaren F1 Experience

The team in Papaya look locked in a battle with Ferrari in 2021, which will surely come to a head in Abu Dhabi. Join the team as they offer an exclusive experience with appearances from Lando and Daniel, behind the scenes tours of the garage and get kitted out in McLaren gear.*

*Some experiences are subject to change depending on COVID restrictions, and some access to drivers and garages may be virtual.

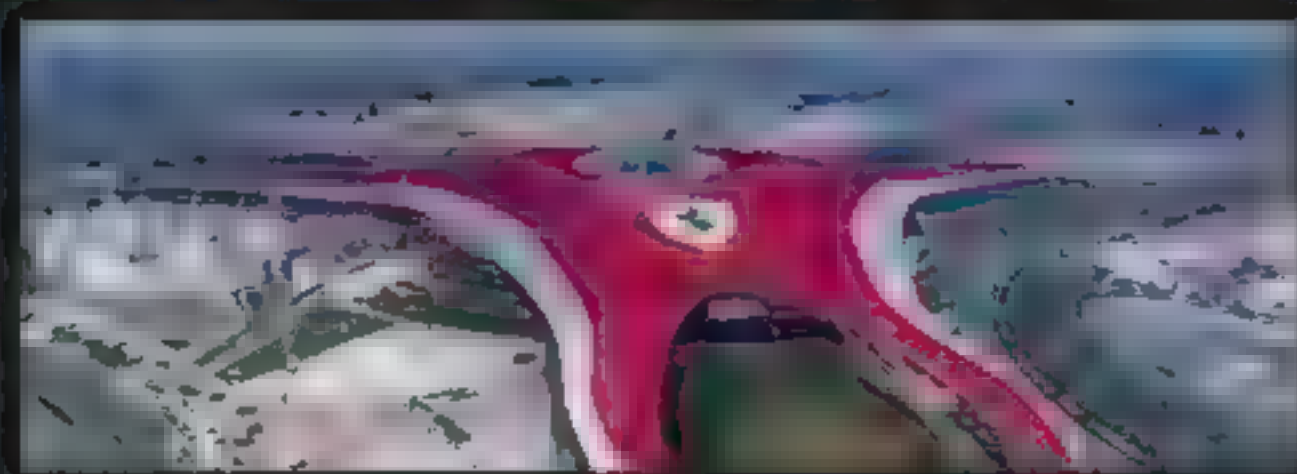


GET BEHIND THE WHEEL

As if the action on track wasn't enough, Abu Dhabi offers plenty of driving experiences in Yas Marina and beyond.

Ferrari World

At the heart of Yas Marina is Ferrari World, a theme park owned by the Italian giants. Experience 4.8Gs as you hurtle from 0 to 240kmh in 4.9 seconds on Formula Rossa – the world's fastest rollercoaster. Or, fulfil a life-long dream and take a Prancing Horse out for a spin around Yas Marina during an unforgettable driving experience.



Dune Buggy

Take control and spend an afternoon exploring the desert behind the wheel of a 4x4 dune buggy or quad bike. Controlling the machines on the soft sand is a challenge, but one never to be forgotten.

Emirates National Auto Museum

Sheikh Hamad Bin Hamdan Al Nahyan hold the record for largest collection of 4x4 vehicles (718) and an array of his machines are on show at this museum. That includes the world's largest truck – a 50 tonne Dodge Power Wagon – and a rainbow collection of Mercedes.

EXPERIENCE THE ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX WITH MOTORSPORT TICKETS

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(Prices correct at time of publication)



View from Yas Suite, Yas Island - Abu Dhabi

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- + The Yas Marina Circuit is a world-class racing venue with a capacity of 60,000
- + The Yas Viceroy Hotel is a luxury 5-star hotel with a world-class spa and pool
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When the going gets tough, the Toyotas keep going

Sebastien Ogier led Elfyn Evans home for an unexpected 1-2 in Sardinia, after the rapid Hyundais of Ott Tanak and Dani Sordo were damaged by the scenery

TOM HOWARD

PHOTOGRAPHY MCKLEIN



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They say that lightning never strikes twice, but it did for Hyundai on Rally Sardinia as it saw victory slip from its grasp in a brutal fashion for the second consecutive event, leaving Sébastien Ogier and Toyota to clean up the spoils.

Sardinia is known as a car breaker, with its rough, narrow, gravel stages offering the sternest of tests for both driver and machine. This was evident from a simple glance at the results sheet – only four WRC cars completed the 20 stages on the Mediterranean island, such was the high attrition rate.

While this rally will be remembered as another one that got away from Hyundai, the dramatic turn of fortune for the South Korean manufacturer shouldn't take any of the shine from Ogier, who underlined exactly why he is a seven-time world champion. This was a rally of two halves, punctuated by a dramatic Saturday that turned the event on its head, leaving Hyundai crestfallen and

Toyota jubilant following an unlikely pendulum swing in its favour.

Elfyn Evans had won last time out for Toyota on Rally Portugal, and he and Ogier were braced for damage-limitation as the pair opened the road in the Sardinia heat, courtesy of sitting first and second respectively in the championship standings. Ogier even admitted before the event that he was unsure if it was worth turning up, knowing how difficult his road position would make things in Sardinia. It's a happy hunting ground for Hyundai, which had won four of the previous five visits, and the Frenchman's fears were soon proved correct as Hyundai once again showcased the speed of its i20 Coupes.

Ott Tänak, aided by a favourable road position, blitzed the opening morning by winning all four stages, before going on to claim his fifth consecutive triumph at the start of the afternoon loop. Team-mate Dani Sordo claimed the remaining three stages to sit 19.4s adrift of Tänak, who was in a different league. The margin could have been even bigger had Tänak not suffered a tyre delamination on the final stage of the day.

For Ogier, ending the day 36.2s behind Tänak in third was a victory in itself, since he had admitted that any gap under a minute would have been a good result. Again, the reigning world champion struck a fine balance of fast and calculated risk-taking driving, while preserving his rubber opening the road. His performance was further highlighted by the travails encountered by Evans and Thierry Neuville, who were directly behind on the road. The pair both struggled for confidence, and had dropped more than a minute in arrears in fourth and fifth respectively.

It proved to be another heartbreaking day for Toyota rising star Kalle Rovanperä. The Finn was the only man who could live with Tänak's searing pace in the opening three stages, but was forced out with a sudden suspension failure, although he would return to the action on Saturday. M-Sport also had one of those days to forget: Teemu Suninen rolled his Ford Fiesta in the very first stage and was out of the contest, while Gus Greensmith had been running >>





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strongly with stand-in co-driver Stuart Loudon, before a transmission issue forced the pair to stop on the final stage of the day. Both cars would return to the event under restart rules on Saturday.

With the road order shuffled, Tanak continued his relentless charge on Saturday, when much cooler conditions greeted the drivers following overnight rain. The 2019 world champion swept the first stage of the morning loop to claim a sixth stage win of the event, extending his lead to 34.8s over Sordo, who hit trouble... It was the start of a downward spiral for two-time Sardinia winner Sordo, and the beginning of Hyundai's collapse. The Spaniard aggressively attacked a man-made watersplash at the end of stage nine, which resulted in his Hyundai stalling. Eventually the engine coughed into life, but only after a significant time loss that put Sordo just 7.5s ahead of Ogier, who along with Evans was enjoying an increased turn of pace. They were now able to live with the leading Hyundai duo.

Hyundai's stranglehold of the stage times was broken on the next test, as Ogier won stage 10 by 1.7s from Tanak, and in doing so took second spot from Sordo, who struggled to find the pace he had displayed on Friday. Evans then pipped Ogier in stage 11 to continue Toyota's resurgence and open a gap to the Hyundai of fifth-placed Neuville.



Neuville initially lacked confidence but fought back to take final podium slot



Tanak was in a different league – until he hit a rock and wrecked his suspension

“The worst thing we can do is to find a scapegoat or to point fingers; we have to stay calm”

The rally was turned on its head in stage 12, the second run through the rough, 13.7-mile Lerno-Monti di Ala test. Drama struck Tanak when, five miles in, he hit a rock that caused terminal suspension damage to the Hyundai. For the second event in a row, suspension failure had forced Tanak out of the lead. Ogier, now the new rally leader, was lucky to emerge through the final test of the morning unscathed as the rough surface damaged the front of his Yaris. Team-mate Takamoto Katsuta was not so lucky, picking up two punctures, while the Hyundai of Pierre-Louis Loubet had to stop and then limp through the stage. M-Sport's rally to forget continued as the returning Greensmith succumbed to electrical issues on the stage.

The afternoon belonged to Ogier, who won three of the next four stages, including the 15th, on which Hyundai's victory hopes evaporated. Sordo, sitting in second, clipped a culvert on the exit of a left-hander, and it ripped the right-rear wheel from the i20, before pitching the car into a gentle roll. Sordo and co-driver Borja Rozada were unscathed but out of the rally, handing Toyota an unlikely 1-2. Ogier comfortably led Evans, who won the final stage of the day, by 38.9s with Neuville, the sole remaining Hyundai driver, more than a minute back in third. With Katsuta the only other WRC driver to complete all 16 stages to date, it also meant only four from the top class were still in the frame.

“We have to remain focused on the job in hand,” said dejected Hyundai boss Andrea Adamo. “That means getting three cars ready for the final day and salvaging what we can. We then have to catch up fast from the next event – immediately – because performances and results like these are unacceptable. The worst thing we can do in these moments is to try and find a scapegoat, to apportion blame or to point fingers; we have to stay calm, try to understand where we need to improve and keep going.”

Ogier made light work of the final four stages, managing his sizeable advantage to claim the 52nd WRC victory of his illustrious career and the first for Toyota in Sardinia. The Frenchman led >>

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home Evans by 46s in the end, although Sardinia almost had one more twist in the tale.

Evans suddenly stalled after ingesting quite a bit of water after navigating through a watersplash on the final powerstage, a short but challenging 4.8-mile run to the finish. The Welshman frantically tried to refire the car and dropped significant time before the Yaris finally breathed into life, and he ushered it to the finish to claim second ahead of Neuville. "The car was working really well until the last stage where this watersplash was causing almost a heart attack for me when I saw Elfyn's car stopping and when he tried to start it it didn't fire up," said Toyota boss Jari-Matti Latvala.

Third-placed Neuville won both runs through the Aglientu-Santa Teresa stage, with the final pass securing him five bonus championship points ahead of Tanak, who salvaged a mere four points from this rally following his return under restart regulations. Roanperera, Ogier and Sordo completed the stage points scorers.

"Winning from being first on the road in Sardinia, it doesn't happen every day. It's special"

The final WRC driver to make the finish was Katsuta, equalling his career-best finish of fourth.

Ogier relished the victory, given its unexpectedness. "It is true that I did mention before the start that I was not so sure what I was doing here this weekend and that I would prefer to be home," he grinned. "It looks like it was a good idea to be here finally. It's hard to rank victories, but winning from being first on the road in Sardinia, it doesn't happen every day, that is a sign that we need to rank this one pretty high, it's special."

Latvala added: "Really successful weekend. We knew if we could get one podium that would be really good because we know from history that Hyundai has been very strong here and Toyota has never won here in its current form."

In WRC2, Jari Huttunen (Hyundai) took the spoils in fifth overall from Mads Ostberg in a dramatic climax on Sunday.



Katsuta equalled his career-best finish in fourth place

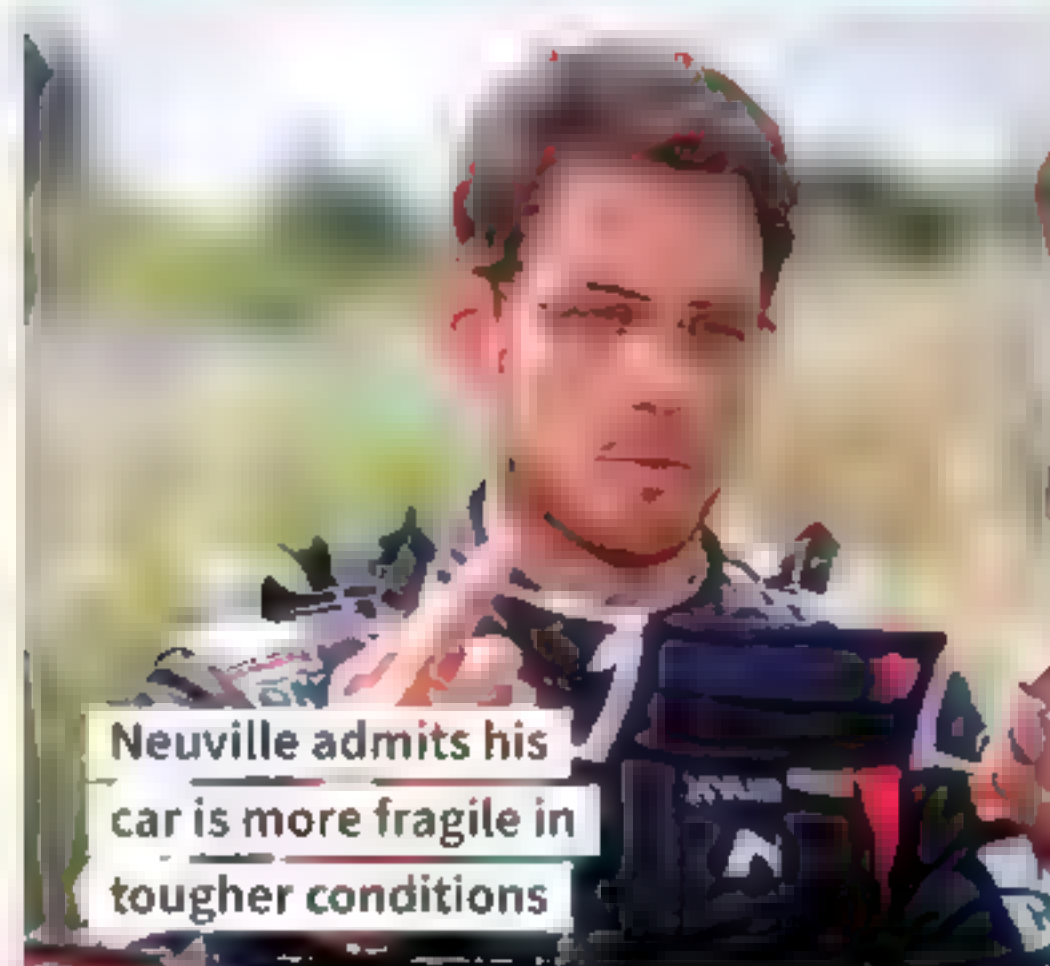
Citroen driver Ostberg had emerged as the man to beat, heading into Saturday with a 27s lead over Huttunen after Adrien Fourmaux (M-Sport Ford) and Andreas Mikkelsen (Toksport Skoda) crashed out on Friday. Ostberg's charge was halted when he sustained a brake issue and then a wheel problem, which meant he checked into midday service six minutes late. That resulted in a one-minute penalty, handing Huttunen a 34.9s advantage. Ostberg incredibly managed to reel in the Finn and grab the lead on Sunday, only for a front-left puncture on stage 18 to drop him behind again, triggering an expletive-laden tirade during a live television interview. His extraordinary outburst ended with the Norwegian receiving a €1000 fine and a suspended 25-point penalty.

Yohan Rossel claimed WRC3 honours in his Citroen to consolidate his championship lead, his first victory since the Monte Carlo Rally in January. ✽



WRC2 winner Huttunen benefited from Ostberg's penalty

HYUNDAI TARGETS RELIABILITY FOR 2022



Neuville admits his car is more fragile in tougher conditions

Thierry Neuville defended the reliability of the Hyundai i20 Coupe following Ott Tanak's Rally Sardinia retirement, but admits that lessons can be learned for the team's new 2022 Rally1 car. For the second rally in a row, Hyundai went from dominating an event to salvaging a podium as Toyota capitalised on the South Korean marque's misfortune to score a 1-2 in Sardinia.

Neuville had surrendered the lead in Portugal two weeks before through damaged suspension after an error, and admits that the i20 is more fragile in rougher conditions compared to the Toyota. But he believes that the rock Tanak hit in Sardinia would have caused terminal damage to any of the WRC field.

"After looking back at what happened on Saturday, if you see the size of the stone he hit, I don't think that any of those cars would have resisted," said Neuville. "It's true that we maybe struggle a bit more than the Toyota in the rougher sections, as we have seen in the past rallies and also last year here in Sardinia and other rallies. Maybe it is something to work on, but I think the focus is more on the new car now, and we know what we have to solve to be stronger for next year with the new car."

After witnessing two shots at victory evaporate, Tanak agrees that the i20's reliability does need improving and is confident that the team can make progress. "For sure, the Hyundai team have done a great job to get me on this level in this car," said the Estonian. "The car is really fast now, so there is nothing stopping us, just the small things. It's a fast car, and we just need to make it reliable. I am sure we can do it."

Hyundai boss Andrea Adamo is determined his team can make up the lost ground in the title race. "We are not happy with the result, but we know that if we go ahead as we are, working together, we can catch up," he said. "We will work hard as we always have done."

RESULTS ROUND 5/12, RALLY ITALY, 3-6 JUNE

POS	DRIVER / CO-DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Sebastien Ogier (FRA) / Julien Ingrassia (FRA)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	3h19m26.4s
2	Elfyn Evans (GBR) / Scott Martin (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	+46.0s
3	Thierry Neuville (BEL) / Martijn Wydaeghe (BEL)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+1m05.2s
4	Takamoto Katsuta (JPN) / Daniel Barritt (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	+6m11.2s
5	Jari Huttunen (FIN) / Mikko Lukka (FIN)	Hyundai Motorsport N / Hyundai i20 R5	+9m31.7s
6	Mads Ostberg (NOR) / Torstein Eriksen (NOR)	TRT World Rally Team / Citroen C3 Rally2	+9m39.2s
7	Yohan Rossel (FRA) / Alexandre Coria (FRA)	Citroen C3 Rally2	+10m37.7s
8	Pepe Lopez (ESP) / Diego Vallejo (ESP)	Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+11m03.7s
9	Jan Solans (ESP) / Diego Sanjuan (ESP)	Citroen C3 Rally2	+11m26.3s
10	Marco Bulacia Wilkinson (BOL) / Marcelo der Ohannesian (ARG)	Toksport WRT / Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+11m34.6s

OTHERS

17	Dani Sordo (ESP) / Borja Rozada (ESP)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+21m20.7s
24	Ott Tanak (EST) / Martin Jarveoja (EST)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+50m23.8s
25	Kalle Rovanner (FIN) / Jonne Halttunen (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	+54m18.8s
26	Gus Greensmith (GBR) / Chris Patterson (GBR)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Fiesta WRC	+1h02m37.8s
31	Teemu Suninen (FIN) / Mikko Markkula (FIN)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Fiesta WRC	+1h23m39.1s
R	Pierre-Louis Loubet (FRA) / Florian Haut-Labourdette (FRA)	Hyundai 2C Competition / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	SS12-brakes

STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	HYUNDAI
SS1 Filigosu-Sa Conchedda 1 (13.85 miles)	Tanak 13m08.3s	Tanak	Rovanpera +1.6s
SS2 Terranova 1 (8.92 miles)	Tanak 9m15.8s	Tanak	Rovanpera +4.0s
SS3 Filigosu-Sa Conchedda 2 (13.85 miles)	Tanak 12m57.4s	Tanak	Rovanpera +6.0s
SS4 Terranova 2 (8.92 miles)	Tanak 9m05.9s	Tanak	Sordo +16.9s
SS5 Tempio Pausania 1 (7.51 miles)	Tanak 10m00.5s	Tanak	Ogier +23.6s
SS6 Erula-Tula 1 (9.30 miles)	Sordo 11m23.5s	Tanak	Sordo +25.3s
SS7 Tempio Pausania 2 (7.51 miles)	Sordo 9m48.5s	Tanak	Sordo +25.0s
SS8 Erula-Tula 2 (9.30 miles)	Sordo and Neuville 11m10.4s	Tanak	Sordo +19.4s
SS9 Coiluna-Loelle 1 (9.32 miles)	Tanak 8m48.1s	Tanak	Sordo +34.8s
SS10 Lerno-Monti di Ala 1 (13.72 miles)	Ogier 12m44.4s	Tanak	Ogier +40.6s
SS11 Coiluna-Loelle 2 (9.32 miles)	Evans 8m43.2s	Tanak	Ogier +40.5s
SS12 Lerno-Monti di Ala 2 (13.72 miles)	Ogier 12m32.7s	Ogier	Sordo +17.5s
SS13 Bortigadas-Aggus-Viddalba 1 (9.13 miles)	Ogier 10m30.3s	Ogier	Sordo +21.3s
SS14 Sedini-Castelsardo 1 (8.10 miles)	Ogier 9m42.5s	Ogier	Sordo +24.6s
SS15 Bortigadas-Aggus-Viddalba 2 (9.13 miles)	Ogier 10m23.0s	Ogier	Evans +40.4s
SS16 Sedini-Castelsardo 2 (8.10 miles)	Evans 9m26.9s	Ogier	Evans +38.9s
SS17 Arzachena-Braniatogghiu 1 (9.48 miles)	Evans 8m45.4s	Ogier	Evans +34.1s
SS18 Aglientu-Santa Teresa 1 (4.84 miles)	Neuville 5m46.0s	Ogier	Evans +33.7s
SS19 Arzachena-Braniatogghiu 2 (9.48 miles)	Evans 8m37.0s	Ogier	Evans +32.9s
SS20 Aglientu-Santa Teresa 2 (powerstage) (4.84 miles)	Neuville 5m33.4s	Ogier	Evans +46.0s

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Ogier 106; 2 Evans 95; 3 Neuville 77; 4 Tanak 49; 5 Katsuta 48; 6 Rovanner 44; 7 Sordo 30; 8 Craig Breen 24; 9 Greensmith 22; 10 Adrien Fourmaux 20

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT 231; 2 Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT 182; 3 M-Sport Ford WRT 82; 4 Hyundai 2C Competition 28.

NEXT EVENT

SAFARI RALLY 1 JULY ISSUE

Can the Hyundais make it to the finish as one of the all-time classic rallies returns to the WRC for the first time since 2002?



Fog and rain gives way for Manthey to pounce in shortened Nurburgring enduro

NURBURGRING 24 HOURS NURBURGRING (DEU) 5-6 JUNE

Yet again, the infamous 'Eifelwetter' plagued the Nurburgring 24 Hours when the Nordschleife enduro had to be interrupted for the third time in four years. With the race eventually slashed by a record-breaking 14.5 hours, it left the competitors with the shortest edition ever and so there was little time to be wasted for the 121 cars that started the race.

But as the contest restarted under still-foggy conditions, risk management was pivotal. It was in these circumstances

that the Manthey Racing crew led by Kevin Estre and Michael Christensen excelled when others failed.

"Kevin got up to his masterpiece today," said former team owner Olaf Manthey, who celebrated his squad's seventh victory in the event. The Porsche 911 GT3-R 'Grello' came out on top to score Porsche's 13th overall win, as the competition stumbled.

In the end, everything came down to a battle between Manthey's sole Porsche and Rowe Racing's ageing BMW M6 GT3 that was making its last factory-backed appearance at the N24 before making way for its M4 successor. A combination of Manthey's experience, Estre's brilliance and

an ill-fated Code 60 for the Rowe car made the difference that gave the French racer, Christensen and Matteo Cairoli the edge by 8.817 seconds after 59 laps. The fourth driver, Lars Kern, did not take part in the shortened bout.

Connor De Phillippi, Martin Tomczyk, Sheldon van der Linde and Marco Wittmann had to settle for second aboard the #98 BMW after losing the lead during the last round of pitstops. That followed a rapid earlier stop, which left the machine needing a longer final service. At least they survived the treacherous conditions, which caught out so many other cars.

TOP 10 RESULTS NURBURGRING 24 HOURS (DEU), 5-6 JUNE (59 LAPS - 930.38 MILES)



POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Matteo Cairoli/Michael Christensen/Kevin Estre/Lars Kern	Porsche 911 GT3-R	24h04m11.960s
2	Connor De Phillippi/Martin Tomczyk/Sheldon van der Linde/Marco Wittmann	BMW M6 GT3	+8.817s
3	Maximilian Gotz/Daniel Juncadella/Raffaele Marciello/Fabian Schiller	Mercedes-AMG GT3	+49.608s
4	Klaus Bachler/Martin Ragginger/Sven Muller/Alessio Picariello	Porsche 911 GT3 R	+53.100s
5	Christopher Haase/Nico Muller/Patric Niederhauser/Markus Winkelhock	Audi R8 LMS GT3	+53.266s
6	Jesse Krohn/Jens Klingmann/Alexander Sims/Stef Dusseldorp	BMW M6 GT3	+54.301s
7	Jules Gounon/Dirk Muller/Schiller/Matthieu Vaxiviere	Mercedes-AMG GT3	+55.223s
8	Philipp Neuffer/Stefan Aust/Nico Menzel/Marco Seefried	Porsche 911 GT3-R	+2m54.805s
9	Bachler/Dirk Werner/Thomas Preining/Lance David Arnold	Porsche 911 GT3-R	+3m12.741s
10	Kenneth Heyer/Thomas Jager/Yelmer Buurman/Dominik Baumann	Mercedes-AMG GT3	-1lap



Kevin Este anchored
Manthey Porsche's effort



#1 Rowe BMW started
from pole after brilliant
effort by Yelloly



Fifth-placed R8
was the race's sole
surviving top Audi

For the third time in succession, the leading Mercedes-AMG of the Haupt Racing Team (in 2019 run as the Black Falcon entry) crashed out of what was an effective lead. This time it was Maro Engel who came together with the popular 'foxtail' Opel Manta at the fastest point of the track, eliminating both cars from the race. It was most frustrating for Engel and Luca Stolz, who experienced their third unsatisfying race in as many weeks after a wrong tyre choice in the ADAC GT Masters season opener at Oschersleben and a strange retirement in the GT World Cup Europe race at Paul Ricard when Engel confused pick-up on his tyre with a car problem.



Both GetSpeed Mercedes
suffered early setbacks;
the #8 car finished seventh

It was the end of all hopes for the first victory for Mercedes in five years, after the two GetSpeed cars suffered from early setbacks with a wrong tyre choice and a side skirt catching fire after contact with another car during the hectic opening laps.

Raffaele Marciello salvaged third place in the #7 Silver Arrow co-driven by Maximilian Gotz and Daniel Juncadella during the closing minutes of the race, robbing the Falken Porsche of its first podium finish since 2015 with an impressive move around the outside at the superfast Schwedenkreuz left-hander.

Two more contenders for the win were eliminated on the spot when Kelvin van der Linde lost his Land-entered Audi R8 LMS at Hohe Acht, taking the unfortunate Julien Andlauer in the Rutronik Porsche with him. Van der Linde was not the first driver to bin an Audi R8 LMS GT3. Just when the field switched back to slicks after a horrendous rain shower, Dries Vanthoor got one of his slick tyres onto the soaked grass at Metzgesfeld and smashed into the wall, which all but destroyed the chassis of the factory-backed Phoenix car.

The privately entered Phoenix Audi got spun around by Marciello after the restart and later had another accident of its own. The sole-surviving top Audi was from Car Collection, which finished in fifth as part of a four-car battle for fourth place in the final stages. Sven Muller held on by just

0.166s in the Falken Porsche.

Once more, the Lamborghinis surprised everyone in the qualifying sessions only to fall short in the race. Axcil Jefferies just missed out on a sensational pole in the Konrad-entered Huracan in rainy conditions that was only overshadowed by a brilliant effort of Nick Yelloly in the #1 Rowe BMW. However, for both cars the race ended in disappointment. Jefferies crashed out on a wet-dry track in the first minutes of the race, losing three laps from which the Lamborghini could never recover. The BMW was a contender for victory, but first fell victim to a new red-flag ruleset that forced the car into a pitstop of almost six minutes, later retiring with electrical gremlins.

Ferrari was just a sidenote, with the Octane126 car dropping out of the race after just four laps and the Wochenspiegel entry never competing for the overall win, finishing 13th as the best non-German car.

The Glickenhau 004C, albeit showing great improvements over the first races of the year, never had the speed of the GT3 cars but managed to finish in 20th despite a broken oil line just before the red flag. At least for one team, the 14.5-hour interruption was a blessing as repairs were carried out.

HEIKO STRITZKE

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Vips fires on all cylinders in the city of flames

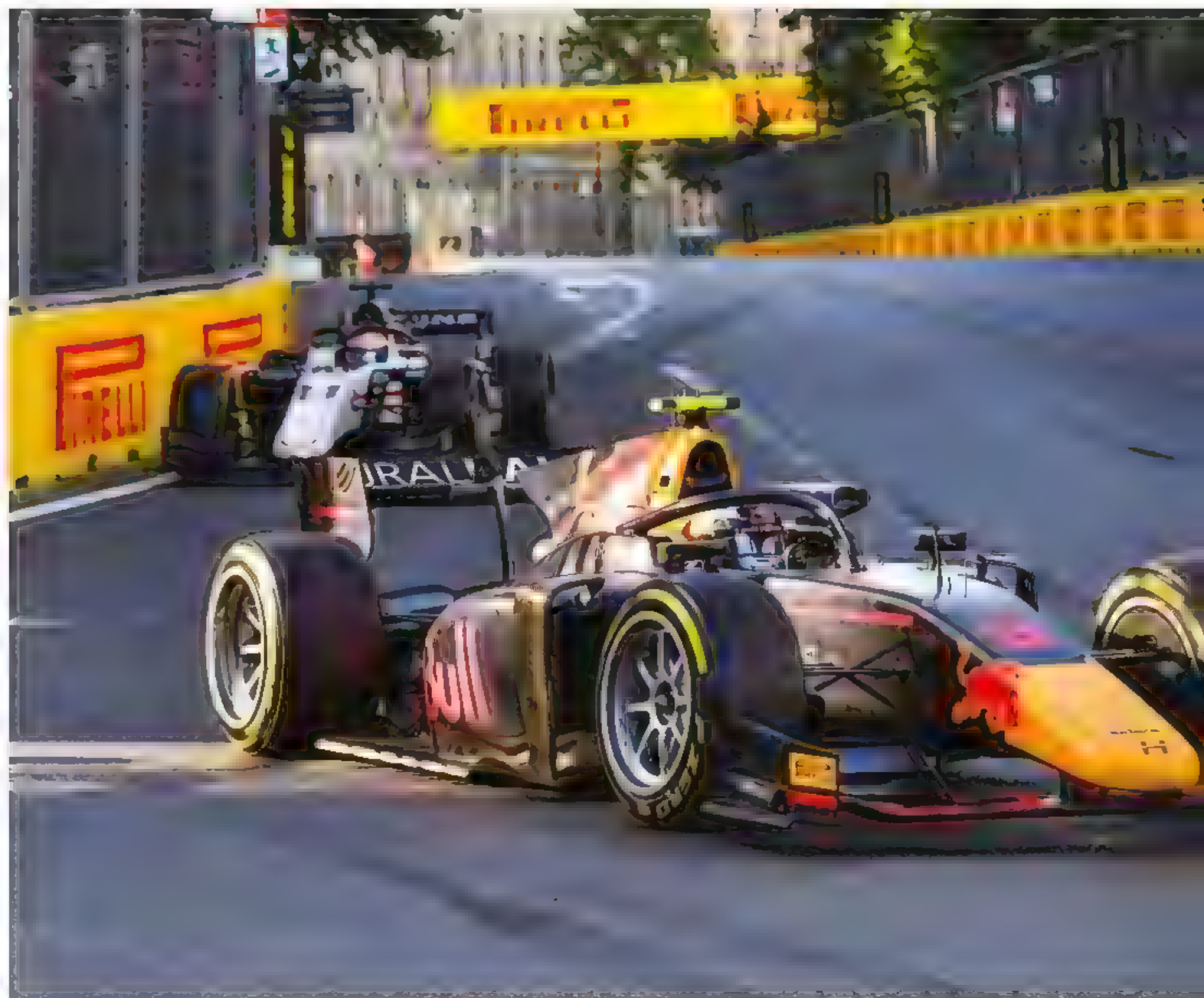
FIA FORMULA 2
BAKU (AZE)
5-6 JUNE
ROUND 3/8

Juri Vips arrived in Baku feeling that he'd had an unlucky start to the FIA Formula 2 season. After all, for all his pace, he was down in 10th in the points. But the Red Bull Junior left Azerbaijan in a much better frame of mind after winning two of the three races and recording a small bit of history in the process.

In a characteristically chaotic round for the F1 feeder series, Hitech Grand Prix driver Vips fought his way to the front of the field to take victory in one of the sprint races and the Sunday feature race — he's the first driver to win a sprint and feature clash on the same weekend since the former GP2 series was rebranded as F2 for 2017.

Vips, in his first full season of F2, topped the Friday morning practice session by over 0.7 seconds. But it was Hitech and Red Bull stablemate Liam Lawson who led the way in qualifying by 0.138s from Vips. Tenth fastest was Robert Shwartzman, meaning Prema Racing's Russian Ferrari protege would start the reversed-grid opener from pole. With Prema as usual having excellent race pace, Shwartzman led all the way to score his first win of the season by over 5s, adding the bonus points for fastest lap.

Jehan Daruvala initially led the pursuit, before being passed at mid-distance by points leader Guanyu Zhou. But charging into contention came Daruvala's Carlin team-mate Dan Ticktum, who stormed

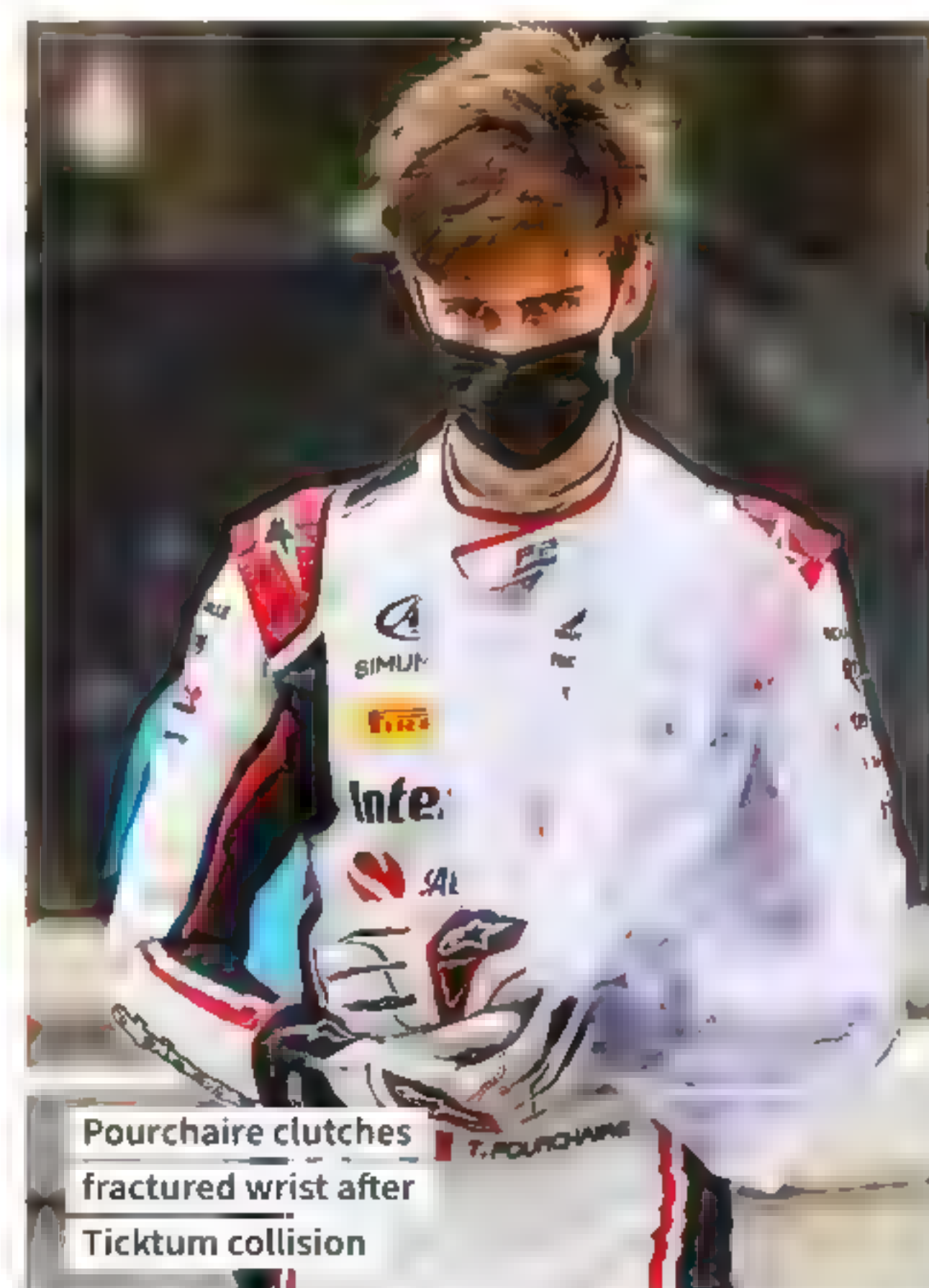
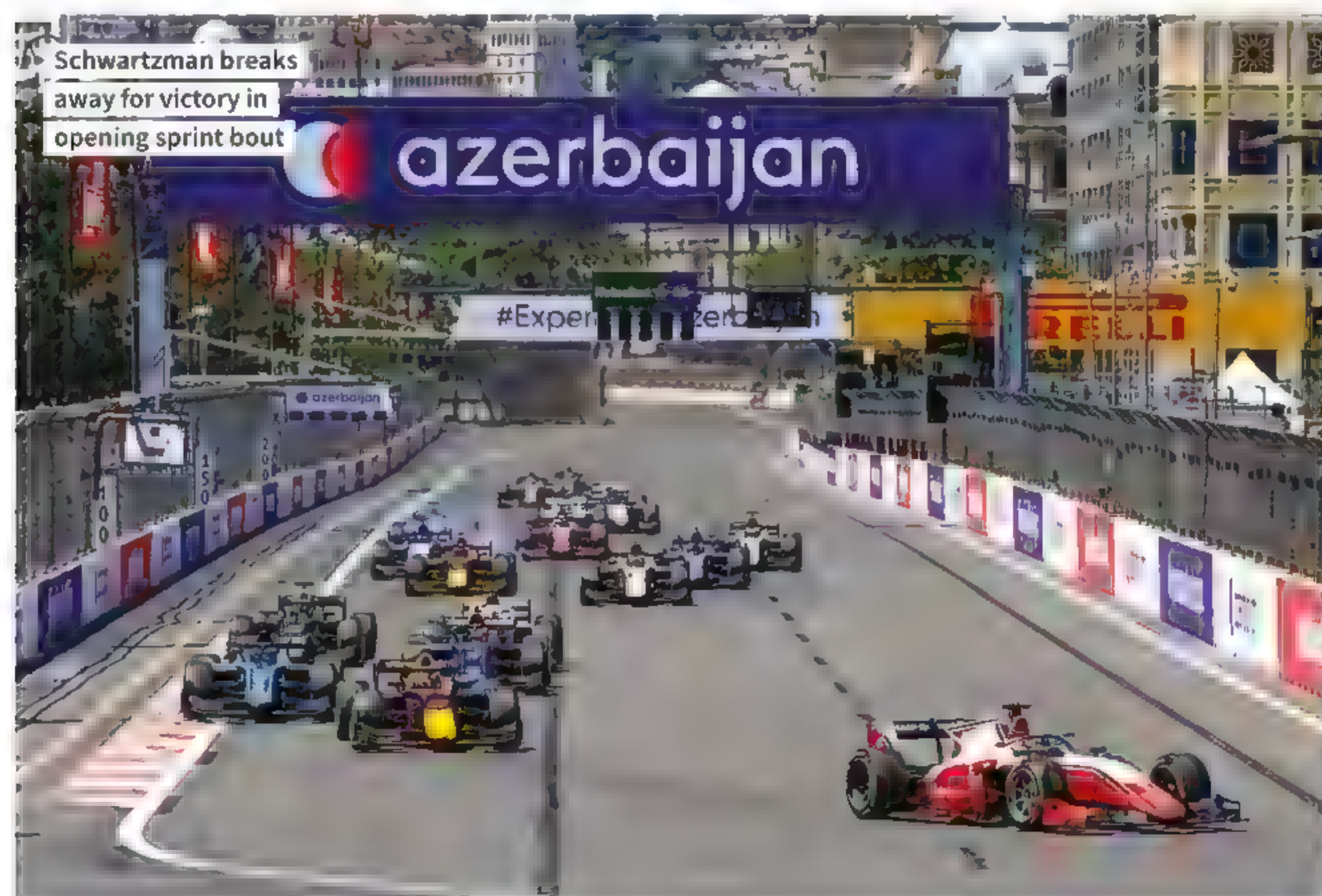


from sixth on the grid to finish second. Zhou was third in his Virtuosi car from Daruvala. Marcus Armstrong was sitting in fifth, but was passed by Ralph Boschung and Theo Pourchaire in the last two laps.

Vips finished eighth, which meant he started the second reversed-grid sprint on Saturday afternoon from third on the grid. From the front row, David Beckmann led the early stages, but Vips passed the Charouz driver and went on to win by over 3s. Daruvala climbed to third, ahead of polesitter Bent Viscaal.

Star performances in this race came from Lawson, Ticktum and Oscar Piastri. Lawson

and Piastri had both been forced out at the beginning of race one, when Felipe Drugovich nudged Piastri's Prema car at Turn 2, the Australian in turn helplessly pushing Lawson into the barriers. That meant they started race two from the back. Even so, Lawson finished seventh and Piastri eighth. Ticktum had a coming-together with Zhou at Turn 1, ending the Alpine F1 junior's race, and dropping Ticktum to the rear. But he fought back to sixth behind Shwartzman. Contact between Pourchaire and Boschung left the ART Grand Prix star with front-wing damage on his way to ninth and put the Campos Racing man out.





Further drama came when Pourchaire's ART team-mate Christian Lundgaard was squeezed into the wall as the cars entered Turn 1 three-wide, while Armstrong also wound up in the barriers amid the battle for fourth, when he locked up on cold tyres.

By Sunday's feature race, Vips was into his stride. He fought off Lawson to claim the lead at the start, and the Kiwi was handed a 10s penalty, which he would serve at his pitstop after an early fight with Piastrì, for forcing Pourchaire off the track.

That left Piastrì clear to chase Vips after the pitstops, but the Estonian held on by over 1s, and it was academic anyway because the Australian Alpine F1 protege had been given a 5s penalty for an unsafe release from his stop. He was easily far enough ahead of Schwartzman to claim second, with Drugovich beating Boschung and the delayed Lawson home for fourth.

There was more Ticktum drama on the opening lap. Pourchaire was pinched between Ticktum (on the inside) and Armstrong into Turn 3, and the trio collided. Pourchaire (with a fractured wrist, see *Pit & Paddock*) and Armstrong were out, while Ticktum pitted for a new front wing and a switch to the prime tyres under the ensuing safety car. That was before the pit window opened, meaning he would need to pit again to go back onto option rubber, and at this stop he served a 10s penalty for the shunt. Ticktum recovered to eighth behind Daruvala, and set fastest lap.

With Zhou struggling to 13th, Vips is now fourth in the standings, just 15 points adrift.

MEGAN WHITE

RESULTS ROUND 3/8, BAKU (AZE), 5-6 JUNE FEATURE RACE (28 LAPS – 104.378 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME	QUALIFYING
1	Juri Vips (EST)	Hitech Grand Prix	57m08.634s	1 Lawson 1m54.217s;
2	Oscar Piastrì (AUS)	Prema Racing	+6.152s	2 Vips 1m54.355s;
3	Robert Schwartzman (RUS)	Prema Racing	+12.623s	3 Piastrì 1m54.508s;
4	Felipe Drugovich (BRA)	UNI Virtuosi Racing	+22.400s	4 Pourchaire 1m54.639s;
5	Ralph Boschung (CHE)	Campos Racing	+24.418s	5 Ticktum 1m54.830s;
6	Liam Lawson (NZL)	Hitech Grand Prix	+26.207s	6 Armstrong 1m54.914s;
7	Jehan Daruvala (IND)	Carlin	+28.081s	7 Boschung 1m54.962s;
8	Dan Ticktum (GBR)	Carlin	+29.801s	8 Zhou 1m55.112s;
9	Christian Lundgaard (DNK)	ART Grand Prix	+34.058s	9 Daruvala 1m55.122s; 10 Schwartzman 1m55.161s;
10	Lirim Zendeli (DEU)	MP Motorsport	+36.167s	11 Drugovich 1m55.173s;
11	Jack Aitken (GBR)	HWA Racelab	+36.993s	12 Lundgaard 1m55.245s;
12	David Beckmann (DEU)	Charouz Racing	+39.973s	13 Beckmann 1m55.336s;
13	Guanyu Zhou (CHN)	UNI Virtuosi Racing	+47.934s	14 Aitken 1m55.651s;
14	Richard Verschoor (NLD)	MP Motorsport	+48.794s	15 Viscaal 1m55.658s;
15	Marino Sato (JPN)	Trident	+55.485s	16 Verschoor 1m55.988s;
16	Roy Nissany (ISR)	DAMS	+55.825s	17 Nannini 1m56.463s;
17	Bent Viscaal (NLD)	Trident	+56.970s	18 Zendeli 1m56.579s;
18	Guilherme Samaia (BRA)	Charouz Racing	-1 lap	19 Sato 1m57.539s;
19	Alessio Deledda (ITA)	HWA Racelab	-1 lap	20 Samaia 1m57.793s;
R	Theo Pourchaire (FRA)	ART Grand Prix	1 lap-accident	21 Deledda 1m58.264s;
R	Marcus Armstrong (NZL)	DAMS	0 laps-accident	22 Nissany no time.
NS	Matteo Nannini (ITA)	Campos Racing	mechanical	

Winner's average speed 109.594mph. **Fastest lap** Ticktum 1m55.199s, 116.566mph.

SPRINT RACE 1 (21 LAPS – 78.267 MILES)

GRID Decided by result of qualifying, with top 10 reversed.

1 Schwartzman 44m35.734s; **2 Ticktum** +5.144s; **3 Zhou** +8.872s; **4 Daruvala** +10.352s; **5 Pourchaire** +11.039s; **6 Boschung** +13.124s; **7 Armstrong** +14.455s; **8 Vips** +14.524s; **9 Beckmann** +17.299s; **10 Viscaal** +17.764s; **11 Lundgaard** +19.738s; **12 Verschoor** +21.064s; **13 Zendeli** +21.837s; **14 Drugovich** +25.849s; **15 Nannini** +35.970s; **16 Nissany** +42.471s; **17 Samaia** +49.289s; **18 Sato** +1m31.300s; **R Lawson** 0 laps-accident; **R Piastrì** 0 laps-accident; **R Aitken** 0 laps-accident; **R Deledda** 0 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 105.302mph. **Fastest lap** Pourchaire 1m56.928s, 114.842mph.

SPRINT RACE 2 (21 LAPS – 78.267 MILES)

GRID Decided by result of Sprint race 1, with top 10 finishers reversed.

1 Vips 46m05.704s; **2 Beckmann** +3.260s; **3 Daruvala** +3.883s; **4 Viscaal** +4.644s; **5 Schwartzman** +5.002s; **6 Ticktum** +6.213s; **7 Lawson** +6.751s; **8 Piastrì** +9.138s; **9 Pourchaire** +13.315s; **10 Drugovich** +15.473s; **11 Nannini** +17.975s; **12 Aitken** +22.828s; **13 Sato** +25.675s; **14 Samaia** +49.981s; **15 Deledda** +52.037s; **16 Nissany** +1m31.818s; **R Armstrong** 7 laps-accident; **R Lundgaard** 7 laps-accident; **R Verschoor** 5 laps-accident; **R Boschung** 0 laps-accident; **R Zhou** 0 laps-accident; **R Zendeli** 0 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 101.877mph. **Fastest lap** Piastrì 1m56.020s, 115.741mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Zhou** 78; **2 Piastrì** 73; **3 Schwartzman** 66; **4 Vips** 63; **5 Ticktum** 60; **6 Pourchaire** 55; **7 Daruvala** 53; **8 Lawson** 50; **9 Drugovich** 41; **10 Boschung** 36.





Hyundai runs 'Rings as new Elantra takes 1-2

WTCR
NÜRBURGRING (DEU)
5 JUNE
ROUND 1/8

Jean-Karl Vernay gave Hyundai's all-new Elantra N TCR an impressive debut victory as he and 21-year-old team-mate Luca Engstler pushed the South Korean carmaker back to the top of the World Touring Car Cup after a difficult 2020 season, with a convincing 1-2 on the Nurburgring Nordschleife.

French driver Vernay, a race winner in Romeo Ferraris' Alfa Romeo Giulietta last year, qualified on the front row despite new-car troubles limiting his practice. He then made a peach of a start to get the drop on Honda's Nestor Girolami, who was starting from pole position for the second year in a row at the grand 15.77-mile circuit.

Girolami reckoned his unsuccessful defence against Engstler on the dash to Turn 1 was "aggressive but fair" as he edged the German's Elantra far into the pitlane exit. He was reprimanded for the move

but kept his third-place result. Ahead of him, an awkward family situation played out as the Engstler team ordered young Luca to hold station behind Vernay. It might have been the season opener, but with members of the Hyundai board looking on, too much was deemed to be at stake to risk throwing away a momentous result.

On the last lap, Engstler drafted up and alongside Vernay along Dottinger Hohe, before he obediently slotted back for the run to the flag. A tearful vent on the team radio was understandable, but Engstler put on a brave face once he acknowledged his first WTCR podium finish. "Racing is not always easy and I need to calm down a bit," he said.

The reversed-grid race held earlier on Saturday morning was a thriller, as Honda veteran Tiago Monteiro kept his cool and passed Yvan Muller down Dottinger Hohe on the final lap to record his first victory on the Nordschleife. The Portuguese started fourth in his Civic Type R TCR but rose up the order after Gabriele Tarquini outbraked himself at Turn 1 at the start of lap two as

the Italian challenged reigning champion Yann Ehrlacher, whose Cyan Racing Lynk & Co was running in formation behind his uncle Muller.

Monteiro was up to second as the field swarmed on to the Nordschleife for the last time, zeroed in on 51-year-old Muller, then calmly made his move. "It was one of those great races when you line up everything in your head and then it goes to plan," said the ex-Jordan Formula 1 racer. "It doesn't happen often, especially not here at the Nordschleife."

Vernay, who finished 10th in the first race, holds an early six-point lead over Monteiro and Girolami. "I made set-up changes after race one and it really worked," he said. "The key was to make a better start than Nestor and that's what we did. Then I was really in qualifying mood, pushing on the first two laps to secure a gap. When you are feeling good you can take risks, it comes naturally. The target is to win the championship. That's why I can't really show how happy I am because there's a long way to go."

DAMIEN SMITH

De Vries in control for G-Drive win

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

PAUL RICARD (FRA)

6 JUNE

ROUND 3/6

G-Drive Racing won the third round of the European Le Mans Series in emphatic fashion, with Roman Rusinov, Nyck de Vries and Franco Colapinto beating reigning champion United Autosports and dominant series leader Team WRT for victory at Paul Ricard.

Yifei Ye grabbed the lead in the WRT Oreca early on and proceeded to build up a substantial gap over Rusinov throughout the opening stint. A full-course yellow around the first pit window and a safety car at the halfway mark wiped out the championship-leading team's advantage, which brought the United Oreca to the fore, albeit under pressure from G-Drive.

United's Job van Uitert was hunted

down by fellow Dutch racer de Vries and was forced to surrender the lead with an hour to go. De Vries then remained faultless throughout the final stint as Tom Gamble passed team-mate van Uitert just before the final round of pitstops. De Vries was never challenged, however, as the Aurus-badged Russian LMP2 machine led the two United Autosports cars to the line by 6.385 seconds.

Ollie Hancock dominated the start to proceedings in the GTE class in his polesitting TF Sport Aston Martin before his lead was virtually wiped out by the

safety car. The most notable incident came when Manuela Gostner's Iron Lynx Ferrari and Hollywood-star Michael Fassbender in the Proton Porsche tangled midway through the second stint, taking both cars out of contention for victory. Iron Lynx was still able to celebrate class honours at the end of the four-hour race as Matteo Cressoni, Rino Mastronardi and Miguel Molina bagged their second win of the season.

NELSON VALKENBURG



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Rusinov/de Vries/
Colapinto 'Aurus'
heads the pack

Hendrick makes it four in a row

NASCAR CUP

SONOMA (USA)

6 JUNE

ROUND 16/36

The Hendrick Motorsports domination of the NASCAR Cup contest in 2021 continued with a fourth consecutive victory, this time with Kyle Larson earning his first road course win.

Although Larson needed to hold off team-mate Chase Elliott in a two-lap overtime to secure his success at Sonoma, his victory never seemed in doubt. Larson started on pole, won both stages and led 57 of the 92 laps. Elliott stayed close for a couple of corners on the start of overtime, but Larson eventually pulled away.

"It was not easy," he said. "Any road course isn't easy. Just trying to keep it on track is tough, especially when you've got

two of the best behind you on the last restart, [Elliott] and Martin [Truex Jr]. I felt like I did a good job at the one before and stretched it out a little bit and didn't want to give him another try at it, but he kept the pressure on."

Truex finished third, ahead of Joey Logano, as Kyle Busch rounded out the top five.

The win is Larson's third of the campaign and ninth of his career. He won three stages and led the most laps in his victory the previous weekend at Charlotte Motor Speedway.

"To get back-to-back wins in the Cup Series is something I've always dreamed of doing," Larson said.

As well as the fourth straight Hendrick win, it was also the fourth consecutive race in which Hendrick drivers finished first and second.

JIM UTTER



Larson always looked good
for his first road course win

WEEKEND WINNERS



WTCR

NURBURGRING (DEU)

Race 1 Tiago Monteiro (above)

Munnich Motorsport

(Honda Civic Type R TCR)

Race 2 Jean-Karl Vernay

Engstler Motorsport (Hyundai Elantra N TCR)

NASCAR CUP

SONOMA (USA)

Kyle Larson

Hendrick Motorsports

(Chevrolet Camaro)

NASCAR XFINITY SERIES

MID-OHIO (USA)

AJ Allmendinger

Kaulig Racing (Chevrolet Camaro)

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

PAUL RICARD (FRA)

Roman Rusinov/Franco Colapinto/

Nyck de Vries

G Drive Racing (ORECA-Gibson 01)



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Oliveira grabs victory for resurgent KTM

MOTOGP
BARCELONA (ESP)
6 JUNE
ROUND 7/19

Prior to the Italian Grand Prix last month, Miguel Oliveira couldn't even buy a top-10 finish in the 2021 MotoGP season. Though team-mate Brad Binder showed flashes of speed with a fifth in Portugal, the start to the campaign had been difficult for KTM.

Despite being one of only two manufacturers allowed to develop an all-new engine for this year, KTM didn't really bring anything radical to the party for the tests and opening rounds in Qatar. In addition to struggling to get the RC16 bike out of the corners, its problems on the way in were compounded by Michelin's front tyre allocation in the early rounds being generally too soft for what the KTM needs.

But the might of the Austrian marque — which won three races in just its fourth season of MotoGP last year — meant it seemed only a matter of time before it would get things right with its 2021 bike.

After trying a new chassis in the post-race Jerez test last month, KTM brought it to Mugello for Oliveira and Binder. It was designed to improve corner exit performance while in turn getting the front end to work better with softer tyres. Throw in some new fuel from ETS and the result was second for Oliveira at Mugello.

While practice form suggested that



Zarco closed in on Oliveira but ran out of time to challenge

championship leader Fabio Quartararo on the works Yamaha had the pace to break away given the chance last Sunday at Barcelona, a number of riders made the effort to highlight Oliveira as a threat.

Both Oliveira and Quartararo chose the hard rear tyre, but Oliveira went for the hard front while the Yamaha rider was on the medium.

Off the line, the Ducati of Jack Miller and Oliveira ensured Quartararo didn't get the clear air he desired straight away. In fact, Quartararo made his afternoon slightly more complicated when he ran wide at the Turn 7 left-hander on lap two of 24 and dropped behind Joan Mir on the Suzuki and Aprilia's Aleix Espargaro. Pramac's Johann Zarco would also soon be ahead of Quartararo.

Oliveira moved into the lead at the same time and clicked into a consistent rhythm of low-to-mid 1m40s for the next eight

tours. At one stage his lead stood at over a second as Quartararo carved his way back up to second by the end of lap seven.

Quartararo hunted down the KTM rider successfully on lap 12 with a precise pass up the inside of the Turn 5 left-hander. But Oliveira didn't let the Yamaha escape, instead working his way back into the lead at the start of lap 14. Both riders put clear daylight between themselves and the battle behind, but Quartararo was beginning to suffer with his front tyre. He had dropped into the clutches of Zarco by lap 22.

After Zarco came past approaching Turn 1, Quartararo ran through the Turns 1/2 runoff — something that would net him a three-second penalty for not ceding a second to Miller behind. Crossing the line third, Quartararo was demoted to fourth. But the drama didn't stop there.

With five laps to go, his leathers had come open and he was forced to ditch his chest



Miller (right) joined Zarco on the podium thanks to Quartararo's first penalty

RESULTS ROUND 7/19, BARCELONA (ESP), 6 JUNE (24 LAPS – 69.449 MILES)

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	Miguel Oliveira (PRT)	KTM	40m21.749s
2	Johann Zarco (FRA)	Pramac Ducati	+0.175s
3	Jack Miller (AUS)	Ducati	+1.990s
4	Joan Mir (ESP)	Suzuki	+5.325s
5	Maverick Vinales (ESP)	Yamaha	+6.281s
6	Fabio Quartararo (FRA)	Yamaha	+7.815s
7	Francesco Bagnaia (ITA)	Ducati	+8.175s
8	Brad Binder (ZAF)	KTM	+8.378s
9	Franco Morbidelli (ITA)	Petronas Yamaha SRT	+15.652s
10	Enea Bastianini (ITA)	Avintia Ducati	+19.297s
11	Alex Marquez (ESP)	LCR Honda	+21.650s
12	Luca Marini (ITA)	Avintia Ducati	+22.533s
13	Takaaki Nakagami (JPN)	LCR Honda	+27.833s
14	Jorge Martin (ESP)	Pramac Ducati	+29.075s
15	Lorenzo Savadori (ITA)	Aprilia	+40.291s
R	Iker Lecuona (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	16 laps-accident
R	Valentino Rossi (ITA)	Petronas Yamaha SRT	15 laps-accident
R	Aleix Espargaro (ESP)	Aprilia	10 laps-accident
R	Marc Marquez (ESP)	Honda	7 laps-accident
R	Danilo Petrucci (ITA)	Tech3 KTM	5 laps-accident
R	Pol Espargaro (ESP)	Honda	4 laps-accident

WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2

BARCELONA (ESP)

Remy Gardner (below)
Ajo Motorsport (Kalex)

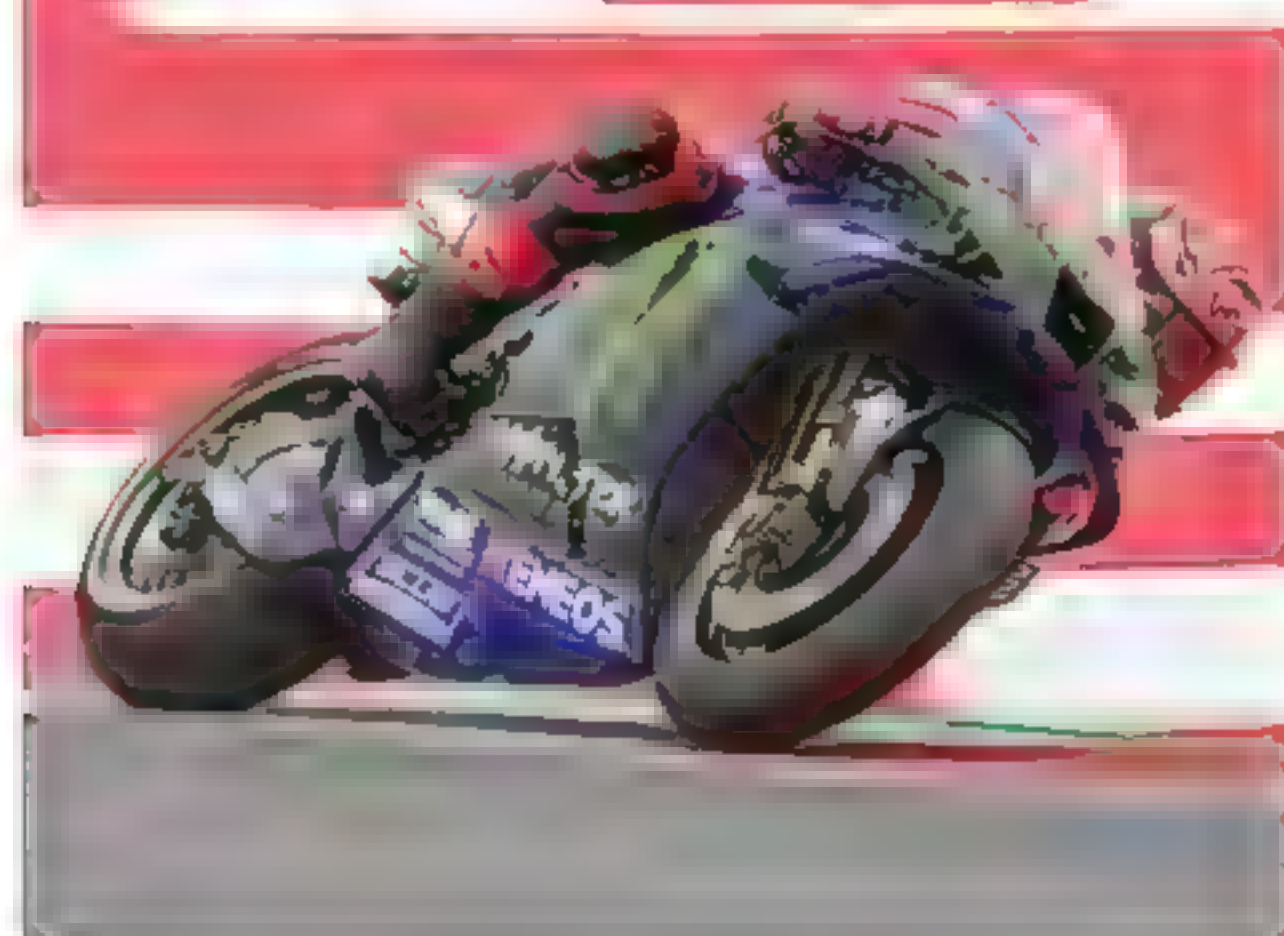
MOTO3

BARCELONA (ESP)

Sergio Garcia
Aspar Team
(Gas Gas)



Penalties pushed Quartararo down the order to sixth



protector. Mir branded this action dangerous, and Quartararo was docked another three seconds after the race – dropping to sixth.

Oliveira had a drop of his own to worry about in the final three laps, his tyres losing life and letting Zarco close him down. But the Pramac rider ran out of time to deny resurgent KTM's first victory of the term.

Miller benefited from Quartararo's first penalty to gain third, while Mir and Maverick Vinales found themselves promoted to fourth and fifth after his second punishment. Working with a new crew chief at Barcelona after a difficult run since his Qatar win, a better qualifying may have shown off the gains Vinales feels he's made with ex-Valentino Rossi ally Silvano Galbusera.

Rossi himself enjoyed a better weekend but crashed in the race, joining the Espargaro brothers of Aleix and Pol, Tech3 duo Danilo Petrucci and Iker Lecuona, and Marc Marquez on the sidelines.

Deciding that the Catalan GP was a day to "risk", Honda rider Marquez went against the norm and selected the soft rear tyre. And for the first seven laps – "the best of the year" – "I was Marc" again, he declared. Unfortunately, he slid out of contention on lap eight at the revamped Turn 10.

LEWIS DUNCAN

Winner's average speed 103.238mph. **Fastest lap** Zarco 1m39.939s, 104.237mph.

QUALIFYING 21 Quartararo 1m38.853s; 2 Miller 1m38.890s; 3 Zarco 1m39.049s; 4 Oliveira 1m39.099s; 5 Morbidelli 1m39.109s; 6 Vinales 1m39.157s; 7 A Espargaro 1m39.218s; 8 Binder 1m39.343s; 9 Bagnaia 1m39.359s; 10 Mir 1m39.431s; 11 Rossi 1m39.605s; 12 P Espargaro 1m41.791s.

QUALIFYING 11 Miller 1m39.153s; 2 P Espargaro 1m39.170s; 3 M Marquez 1m39.181s; 4 Nakagami 1m39.347s; 5 Martin 1m39.532s; 6 Lecuona 1m39.567s; 7 Bastianini 1m39.590s; 8 Petrucci 1m39.744s; 9 Marini 1m39.942s; 10 A Marquez 1m40.009s; 11 Savadori 1m40.158s.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Quartararo 115; 2 Zarco 101; 3 Miller 90; 4 Bagnaia 88; 5 Mir 78; 6 Vinales 75; 7 Oliveira 54; 8 A Espargaro 44; 9 Binder 43; 10 Morbidelli 40; 11 Nakagami 31; 12 P Espargaro 29; 13 Bastianini 26; 14 A Marquez 25; 15 Alex Rins 23; 16 Petrucci 23; 17 Martin 19; 18 M Marquez 16; 19 Rossi 15; 20 Lecuona 13; 21 Marini 13; 22 Stefan Bradl 11; 23 Savadori 4; 24 Michele Pirro 3; 25 Tito Rabat 1.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Yamaha 143; 2 Ducati 143; 3 KTM 83; 4 Suzuki 82; 5 Honda 52; 6 Aprilia 45.

Marc Marquez briefly felt like himself again for seven laps – then slid off



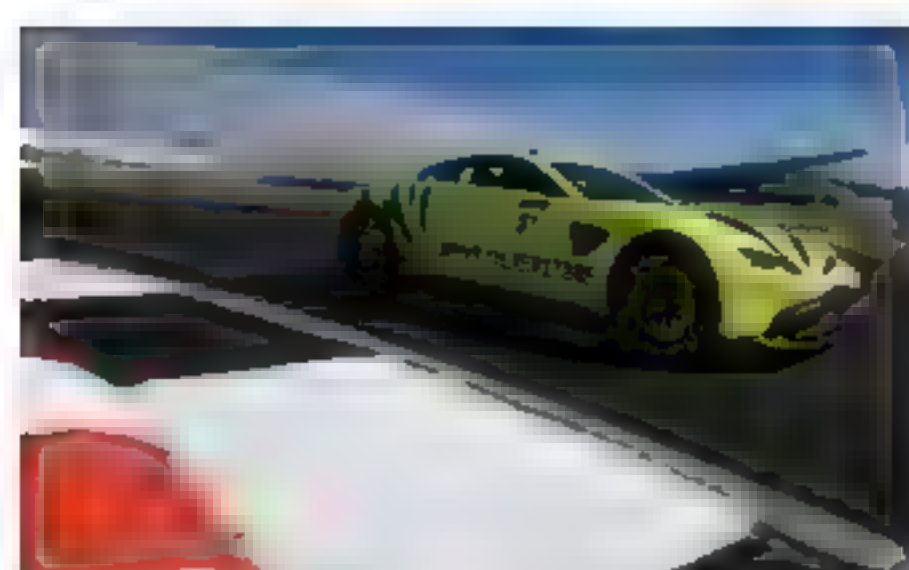
NEXT REPORT

GERMAN GP
24 JUNE ISSUE

Despite a cluster of penalties dropping him to sixth place at Barcelona, Yamaha rider Fabio Quartararo holds a 14-point advantage over Pramac charge Johann Zarco as the paddock moves on to the Sachsenring.

FATHER'S DAY GIFT GUIDE

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- Prepare proposals for the Commissions and for the WMSC, in agreement with the Commission Presidents and Secretariats.
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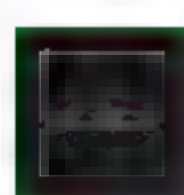


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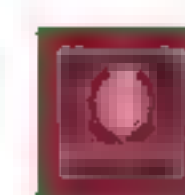
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Dominant champion to face challenges to his crown at Snetterton opener, including from double winner Cammish



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IS BACK UNDER WAY



SUMMERS SHINES AT
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A black and white photograph of a Formula 1 car, likely a Mercedes-AMG Petronas F1 car, with the name 'RICHARD MILLE' visible on the side. The car is in motion, with a blurred background of a race track and spectators.

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Pembrey recently cancelled events that could now actually be held



WELSH MOTORSPORT FINALLY GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT

CORONAVIRUS

Welsh motorsport has finally been given the green light to restart, with the devolved government permitting outdoor events to take place again.

Unlike the rest of the UK, the sport was unable to resume in Wales last year following the coronavirus pandemic, causing all meetings to be suspended from March. In England, racing got back under way in July but just one small, trial 750 Motor Club event was held at Anglesey all year. It had been a similar story in 2021 too – on-track action restarted in April in England after the second COVID-19 wave, but still was not possible in Wales.

But, having adopted a more cautious approach, Wales has moved into line with the rest of the UK, and 4000 spectators are now permitted at outdoor sporting events.

Ben Taylor, CEO of the British Automobile Racing Club, which operates Pembrey, welcomes the relaxation of restrictions, but says further frustration has been caused by the lack of notice surrounding last Friday's announcement.

"It's great that we're up and running again but there's a degree of frustration over the process," he said. "It would've been very nice for them to have given us a bit of advance warning they were thinking about this. There was no indication that



Just one 750MC event took place in the whole of 2020

anything was going to change imminently.

"To go from 50 participants and no spectators to as many participants as you like and 4000 spectators from Monday was extraordinary. I'm delighted [about the restart], but I'm furious that they've shown so little understanding of how things work in the real world."

A sprint was held at Pembrey last weekend, and Taylor says efforts are being made to reschedule a bike event for later this month following the unexpected freedom to organise fixtures once again.

The first Welsh car circuit racing event is due to be the British Racing & Sports Car Club's visit to Anglesey on 10-11 July, a week after an MN Circuit Rally double-header is set to be held at the venue.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

OPINION



It has been 15 months since we've been able to say that motorsport can take place in all parts of the UK. In that

time, the coronavirus pandemic has meant a wealth of confusing and contrasting rules and regulations across the different nations but, finally, Wales has joined the party and motorsport is permitted to be held there once again.

And it's not a moment too soon. Welsh venues have been crying out for such a decision for months and months. Just one trial event took place last year, whereas hundreds of meetings ran successfully over the border in England. The wait continued into 2021 and no obvious end was in sight.

Few issues have provoked such anger and bafflement when speaking to those involved as the Welsh government's approach to outdoor events. And that even continued with the announcement that things could get going again. Within the space of 72 hours, the situation had gone from virtually nothing having happened for 15 months, to events with 4000 spectators being allowed, with no middle ground. The additional frustration that lack of warning has caused is understandable, because a number of June events had only recently been cancelled.

But, those gripes aside, this does mark a significant moment. We have to be thankful that the seemingly never-ending ban on permitted motorsport is finally over. What remains to be seen is the long-term impact that the lack of activity has had on Welsh motorsport. It will take far more than 72 hours for that picture to suddenly become so clear.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Trial Anglesey meeting had strict protocols in place





TRIBUTE TO MCCOSH Legends teams paid tribute at Brands Hatch to former racer Gerard McCosh, who died of cancer in February. They paraded behind the Scottish farmer's car, driven for the occasion by his friend Andrew Donald, with McCosh's trademark soft toy mascot Napoleon the pig firmly in place. What made the tribute unique was that all the other cars on a 30-plus grid boasted identical pink piglets. The popular driver's partner Jane and daughters Millie and Claudia attended the commemoration, and a fundraising appeal was launched for Macmillan Cancer Support. Race number 69, always carried by McCosh, has been 'retired' from the championship. **Photograph by Gary Hawkins**

Race of Remembrance event to return this year

ANGLESEY

The Race of Remembrance will make a return this November after being cancelled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The poignant event features an endurance race as well as a special Remembrance Day service, when the on-track action is paused to allow for a time of reflection.

The event was not originally on the 2021 calendar, but it has now been announced that it will take place at Anglesey on 12-14 November. Organised

by Armed Forces motorsport charity Mission Motorsport, the race will be run to the same 12-hour format as before, with a pause overnight on Saturday and again for the 11am service on Sunday.

Previously it has been administered by the British Automobile Racing Club, but the British Racing & Sports Car Club will be operating the meeting this year.

Mission Motorsport CEO James Cameron said: "Race of Remembrance is a weekend whereby those who wish to



Remembrance service is important part of November Anglesey event

can take part in a very special pitlane remembrance service and come together as one community. By broadcasting the service live, we are ensuring that those who would like to, but are

not necessarily able to do so, are able to join a service regardless of where they are in the world."

An online iRace of Remembrance will also take place this year.

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Hankey and Flewitt step up to GT3 for three-event campaign

BRITISH GT

Two additional McLaren 720S GT3s will bolster the entry for the British GT Championship's longest race of the season, the Silverstone 500, this month.

Reigning GT4 Pro-Am champions Euan Hankey and Mia Flewitt will step up to the top class in the Team Rocket RJN machine that won the opening round of last year's series at Oulton Park for their first of three appearances this year.

The Anglo-Swedish pair, who were the only full-season Pro-Am entry in GT4 last year, will also enter the two-hour races at Spa and the Donington Park season finale.

Flewitt said: "Stepping up from GT4

was always the plan for this season, but it's been a challenging year so far to make it happen. I'm forever grateful to all who have helped and supported us to get here. Bring on Silverstone!"

The grid will be boosted further by the return of 2018 British GT3 title-winning squad Optimum Motorsport, which is again fielding Ollie Millroy and Brendan Iribe after a promising one-off outing in last year's Silverstone round.

American Iribe and co-driver Millroy are regulars in the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup, and will race a Ferrari 488 in the GTE Am class at this year's Le Mans 24 Hours.

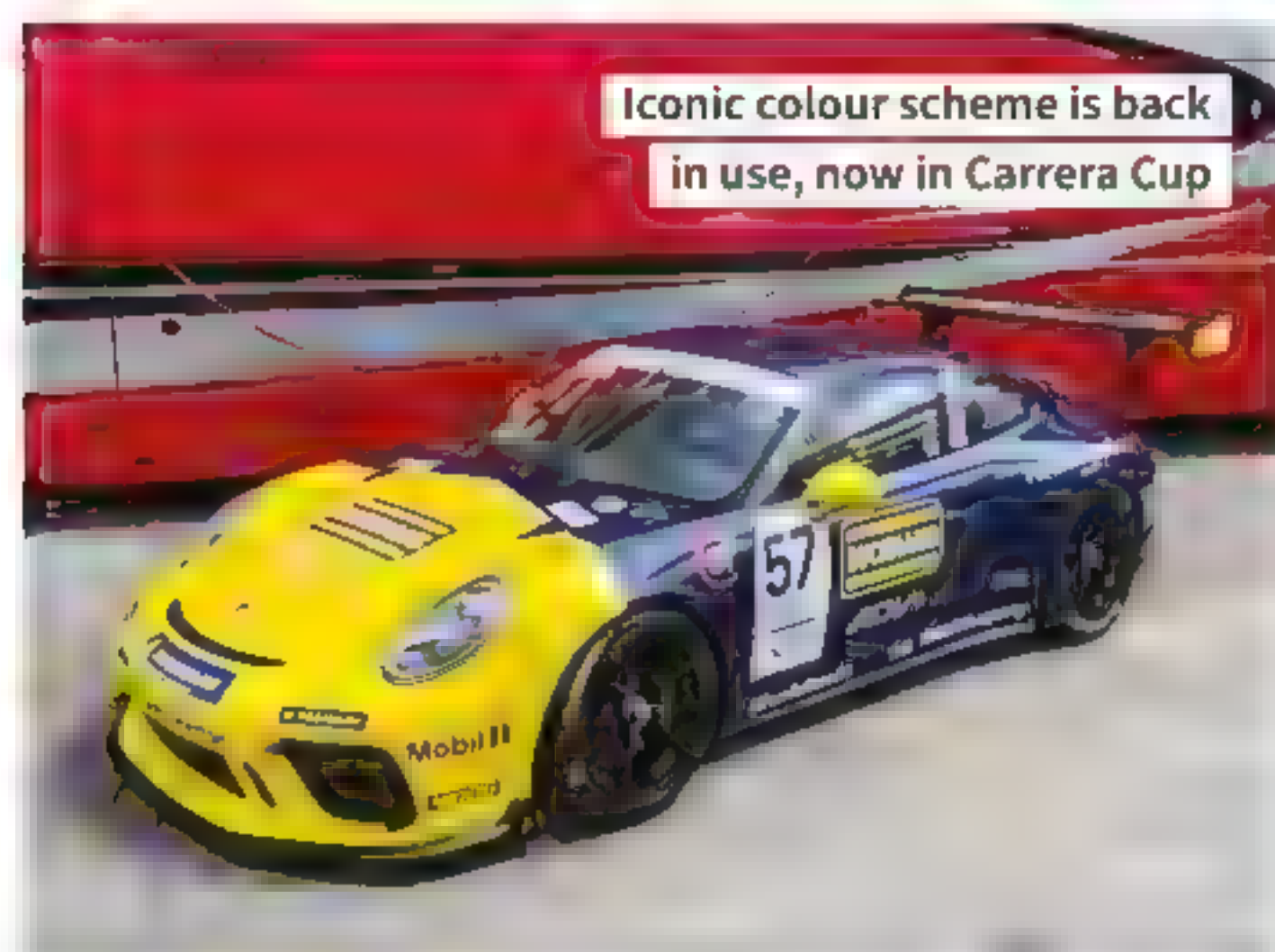
JAMES NEWBOLD



Duckhams livery back with Cammish

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

The iconic blue-and-yellow colours of Duckhams are set to return to motorsport this weekend at Snetterton on the car of two-time Porsche Carrera Cup GB champion Dan Cammish.



The company enjoyed a longstanding partnership with the works Van Diemen squad in Formula Ford, and countless future stars spent the early stages of their careers racing in the distinctive livery, including Formula 1 drivers Mark Webber, Eddie Irvine and Jan Magnussen.

Now Cammish is set to carry the colours as he returns to the Carrera Cup with the Redline Racing squad, after spending the past three seasons driving for Team Dynamics in the British Touring Car Championship.

"I am really looking forward to working with Duckhams and Porsche Centre Preston," said Cammish. "The Redline Racing team is a brilliant outfit with whom I've shared much success in the past so I'm confident that I, and my partners, are in the best possible position ahead of the new season."

P74 TOCA SUPPORTS PREVIEW

IN THE HEADLINES

EUROPEAN DRAG RACING OFF

The FIA European Drag Racing Championship event scheduled to take place at Santa Pod Raceway in September has been officially cancelled again due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The FIA event at Tierp Arena in Sweden in August has also been cancelled, but both venues will seek to hold events under national rules and permits on those weekends.

NEW VEHICLES FOR BRSCC

The British Racing & Sports Car Club has unveiled a new dedicated Rescue Unit vehicle, as well as a Jaguar XF Sportbrake safety and course car provided by club partner runyourfleet.com. Both vehicles, which were showcased at Mallory Park last month during the British Superkart Championship meeting, underline the club's commitment to safety and efficiency.

BRITCAR'S DROUGHT OVER

Nicole Drought will return to Britcar action this weekend at the wheel of a Motus One-run SEAT Cupra TCR after a test at Oulton Park. Drought, who took three class wins last year in the championship and will partner Danny Krywyj this weekend, said: "It was a very enjoyable day. Oulton is probably my favourite circuit too so I'm delighted to have my first race in the Cupra there."

GRAHAM FAILS TO START

The unique Graham Formula Junior's first competition appearance since the 1970s was brief at Cadwell Park on Saturday. Restored over four years by owner Alan Croft, the chassis (below) – built by Charlie Graham in Dumfries, who previously modified and raced the ex-Stirling Moss Cooper Mk4 500 – had been shortened for short-oval GP Midget racing! Following a shakedown at Blyton Park, its engine refused to run cleanly in qualifying.



Ex-Vasser Lanan FF1600 wins on return

FORMULA FORD 1600

Bill Bray's unusual Lanan 1604 Formula Ford made a winning comeback last weekend at Cadwell Park, almost 30 years after it last competed.

The last of four chassis built, it had "a short but chequered history" according to Bray, who founded Lanan with school friend Robin Webb and racer John Bright.

Two future stars of American single-seater racing drove the car in period, including 1996 CART champion Jimmy Vasser, who raced it in the wet 1990 Formula Ford Festival but was taken off by Steffen Nielsen in his heat.

IndyCar team owner Bryan Herta also tested 1604 in 1991, but elected to race a Reynard with Lanan. "The correct decision," admitted Bray.

The car took class victory in the hands of Simon Jackson at Cadwell on Sunday



when it competed in Heritage Formula Ford. "Seeing the car we created win was very satisfying, stunning actually," said Bray.

Having lost sight of it after Mark Bryan and Chris Perry's Champion of Mallory exploits around 1993, Bray bought its bones back a few years ago, and resurrected it.

"The other guy [Tom Roark, in a Van Diemen RF92] was on a par with Simon, and I'm glad it was a great race," Bray said.

"There's no fun in finishing second way

back, and no fun in being first by a very long way. These cars are meant to be driven hard and they were. We're fortunate that we've put [Simon's son] Cam in the car in testing and he's great with feedback.

"We'll do more races. James [Beckett, series organiser] needs support and, when the grids are bigger, we know we'll have to be quicker. Our Neil Bold engine is good, but we'll do more work on the handling."

MARCUS PYE

Rare Lotus 23C makes a race appearance

HISTORICS

A rare Lotus 23C was given only its second outing in many years at the Historic Sports Car Club's Silverstone meeting last month.

In the hands of Ed Thurston and Charlie Jones-Best, the car raced in the Guards Trophy having previously competed at the Goodwood SpeedWeek event last October.

The 23C is owned by

Tony Best and spent many years in a private collection in the US. It is said to be one of only six built in period, of

which only four are thought to remain and it may be the only one currently in the UK.

The main difference to the

far more common 23B are flared wheel arches to accommodate bigger wheels and tyres from Formula 2 in the period. This example originally ran as an 1100cc car, but different engine configurations were used by Lotus customers including the 1600cc twin-cam.

The 23C qualified an excellent third at Silverstone but retired from the race with a misfire.

PAUL LAWRENCE



ANGELO R. DRIVE

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NEW AUDI TT SERIES BEGINS AT SNETTERTON

GPR TROPHY

The GPR Trophy made its debut at Snetterton last weekend, with seven Audi TT cars prepared for the opener.

The arrive-and-drive series was launched to provide a hassle-free weekend for newcomers wanting to make their first foray into car racing.

FF Corse founder Anthony Cheshire, who has been key in setting the series up, said: "Our main business is FF Corse Ferraris and taking people on competitive trackdays.

"There comes a time when there is an urge to scratch that itch for racing. It's not right to do it in a Ferrari because of the nature of the cars and the licence requirements. So we have the Audis here."

The TTs run 1.8-litre turbo engines, with a standard ECU remapped to deliver 240bhp. More cars are being built for the next round at Oulton Park, and the aim is to have 15-20 cars out each weekend.

"I am a racer at heart and I want to get people into racing," Cheshire said. "The point is to put the fun back into racing, and I want them to arrive and have fun in a competitive environment without spending loads."

The cars are prepared by the series and randomly drawn before the race to ensure fairness for drivers.

The top two qualifiers were separated by just 0.001 seconds, but reliability hampered the races – two of the seven cars weren't able to compete, while another, used by two different drivers in the two races, suffered power problems on track in both. Jack Sycamore and Neil Huggins were the two victors.

JASON NOBLE



Revised pitstop regulations for Britcar events after accident

BRITCAR

New pitlane protocols will be implemented for the Britcar Championship's Oulton Park meeting this weekend following an incident at the previous round.

Last month at Snetterton Jonathan Beeson's VW Golf was hit by another car in the pitlane and sent back towards the pitboxes before slamming into the side of the stationary Praga R1 of Jack Fabby.

Although no one was hurt in the incident, an immediate investigation was launched and new pitstop regulations were approved last month by Motorsport UK.

The new rules mean cars will travel at 40km/h (25mph) instead of 60km/h and vehicles have to park at a 45-degree angle in a specified pitbox, as opposed

to parallel with the pits.

There is also a limit on the number of mechanics allowed to work on the car, with the release of the vehicle – which must be pushed back – the responsibility of a car controller.

As well as being implemented for the Britcar Endurance and Praga races, the regulations will also apply to the Britcar Trophy.

Claire Hedley, owner of the Britcar Championship, said: "We've been talking to all the people that have vast experience, people who have worked in British GT to see what the pros and cons are for everything.

"Our grids are growing and we have to make sure it's safe. Safety is paramount."

STEFAN MACKLEY

American Morales joins Arden in F4

BRITISH F4

Arden Motorsport will run American David Morales for the remainder of the British Formula 4 season, beginning this weekend at Snetterton.

The 17-year-old most recently raced in the F4 NACAM Championship, claiming a first podium last year and ran towards the front in the series' two recent non-championship rounds.

He said: "Arden are a very established, race-winning team and I've been really impressed with their level of professionalism, the standard to which the cars are prepared and the positive atmosphere within the team. It's been very easy to settle in.

"Snetterton is going to be one of the more challenging circuits on the calendar, it's very technical and you really have to link several corners

together to get the lap time, so in some regards it's a tough starting point."

Arden team principal Garry Horner added: "He already arrives at the team with a good track record and plenty of promise, and I'm looking forward to seeing what that, combined with our in-house driver development, can lead to. Having an extra car on the grid is always a positive."

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The best places to spectate from in the UK

Now that fans can once again return to the spectator banks, the Club Autosport team have picked out their favourite places to watch great racing

STEPHEN LICKORISH, STEFAN MACKLEY AND MARCUS PYE



STEPHEN LICKORISH
GROUP NATIONAL EDITOR

We are blessed with some brilliant places to watch motorsport in the UK, such as Brands Hatch's Paddock Hill Bend, but one of the very best has to be Knockhill. Whether it's watching the cars power out of the final hairpin or seeing them flying over the kerbs at the chicane, you're able to get incredibly close to the action. The undulating nature of the circuit means that from almost any vantage point you can see a whole sequence of corners and the compact lap makes for a short wait before the cars pass by again. Given the continuing restrictions on overseas travel, perhaps this is the year to take a trip to Fife in Scotland instead. You won't be disappointed.



STEFAN MACKLEY
DEPUTY NATIONAL EDITOR

Standing on top of the banking at Camp corner, spectators almost look down on top of the cars as they make their way through the fast right-hander that ends a lap of the Castle Combe Circuit. Even with the introduction of the Bobbies chicane in 1999, the approach into and exit of this corner are quick, with little in the way of runoff and many races decided here. Not only that but fans are afforded a great view as cars hurtle along the start/finish straight, up Avon Rise and disappear into Quarry lap after lap. Speaking of Quarry, it's another fine location to watch from at the Wiltshire venue and is the scene of many opening-lap spills.



MARCUS PYE
SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

From the fabulous borrows and cambers of Cadwell Park's writhing Hall Bends — where the most committed competitors' heart-in-mouth progress is amplified by the urgency of their engines' bark, echoing from the adjacent trees — to Thruxton's flat-out Church, viewed from the field-compressing chicane, there is so much choice. My favourite, though, is the approach to St Mary's at Goodwood where the boldest drivers drift through the right-handed 'Moss' kink at breakneck speed, balancing their steeds for the subsequent off-kilter left. John Surtees was peerless through there in a Ferrari 250 GTO at an early Revival. Utterly magical, unforgettable...



Jackson flies to a quartet of Formula Ford wins

**CADWELL PARK
HSCC
5-6 JUNE**

Four Formula Ford wins for Lincoln speed merchant Cameron Jackson and three victories each for Benn Simms and Kevin Kivlochan characterised the Historic Sports Car Club's annual Wolds Trophy event. Jackson knew he'd been in a fight though, for young Yorkshireman Sam Harrison pushed him incredibly hard over the Classic and Historic era races. Indeed, Harrison had nosed his Elden ahead of the Winkelmann driver moments before he crashed out of their final scrap at Charlie's.

Jackson and Harrison were separated in Saturday's Historic set when Harrison's left-rear wheel came loose. Merlyn men Matt Wrigley and Horatio Fitz-Simon (pursued by a light oil haze) led the chase from Over 50s victor Brian Morris (Lola T202) and Danny Stanzl (Elden), who brushed Fitz-Simon's rear tyre in a massive

moment during lappery at Charlie's. "I thought I was going over him so stood on everything," he said. Fitz-Simon and Stanzl completed Sunday's podium, while Wrigley staved off determined Over 50s topper Ross Drybrough, fighting back after a spin.

Rick Morris (Royale RP29) chased 'The Cam and Sam Show' home in Saturday's Classic FF1600 bout. He split them at Sunday's start, but sportingly waved Harrison past onto lap two, Harrison setting fastest lap while catching Jackson. Cam's father Simon — debuting Bill Bray's newly restored Lanan 1604 in the Heritage quintet, which joined Sunday's race — repassed rapid local Tom Roark's lilac Van Diemen RF92 for gold.

A 36-car FF2000 entry warranted a qualifying heat per day, won by Ben Glasswell and 1979 Euroseries champion Adrian Reynard in Reynards. Returning champion Andy Park stalked Benn Simms during Saturday's final then skittered past, appropriately into Park, during a traffic-

affected last lap. Graham Fennymore was third, from Paul Allen, debuting the ex-Ian Briggs/Callum Grant Delta.

Simms blitzed Sunday's sequel from the start, collecting a wild twitch at the Gooseneck, with Park his closest rival. Glasswell and Reynard finished sixth and seventh, ahead of Glasswell's father Stephen. Antony Raine (Merlyn Mk28) and Fraser Collins (Lola T580) shared the early-class successes.

Saturday's Road Sports dominator Kevin Kivlochan fancied his chances of doubling up in Sunday's '70s set. But Will Plant, whose Morgan was silenced by coil failure while leading on day one, had other ideas. From 25th on the grid, Plant thundered through to second behind Julian Barter, who jumped poleman 'KeKi' at the start as front-row partner Howard Payne (Lotus Europa) couldn't find second gear, thus was swamped by the pack.

Barter had topped the TVR trio with Dave Karaskas and Antony Ross in Kivlochan's wake on Saturday, while sixth-placed Jim Dean (Europa) set fastest lap. Plant's Sunday pace was unmatched, but he wound up 2.132s short of Barter, chased by Kivlochan, Dean, Karaskas and Nigel Armstrong (Elan).

Sunday's Historic Road Sports race was a case of déjà vu, since the top six was repeated. This time, in the battle to be runner-up to Kivlochan's AC Cobra, veteran Peter Garland forged his Morgan past John Davison's Elan S1 at the lights, and kept him behind until half-distance.

Drifting Pat Barford's Lola Mk2 superbly, Peter de la Roche passed Chris Drake (Terrier T4) to win both early Formula Junior races by a country mile. Drake pulled up on Sunday, promoting Ray Mallock (U2)



ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: WALKER

WEEKEND WINNERS

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD

Races 1 & 2 Cam Jackson (Winkelmann WDF2)

CLASSIC FORMULA FORD

Races 1 & 2 Cam Jackson (Winkelmann WDF2)

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD 2000

Qualifying heat Ben Glasswell (Reynard SF77)

Race 1 Andrew Park (Reynard SF81)

Qualifying heat 2 Adrian Reynard (Reynard SF79)

Race 2 Benn Simms (Reynard SF77, below)

'70s ROAD SPORTS

Race 1 Kevin Kivlochan (Morgan +8)

Race 2 Julian Barter (TVR 3000M)

HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS

Races 1 & 2 Kevin Kivlochan (AC Cobra)

HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR FRONT-ENGINE

Races 1 & 2 Peter de la Roche (Lola-Ford Mk2)

HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR REAR-ENGINE

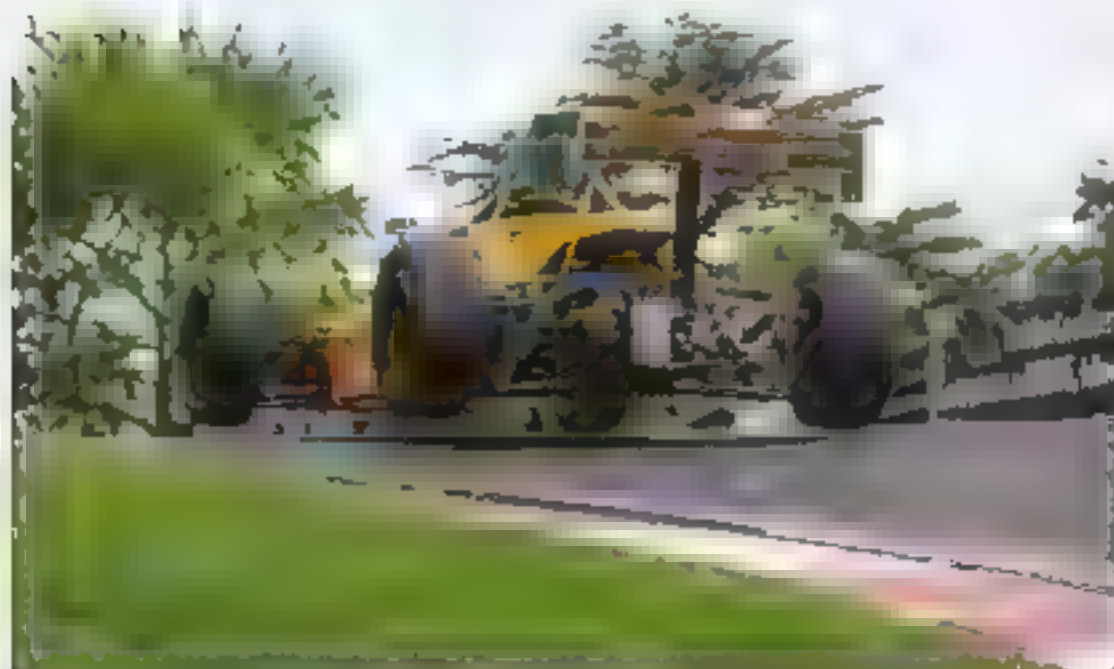
Races 1 & 2 Adrian Russell (Lotus-Ford 22)

CLASSIC CLUBMANS

Races 1 & 2 Mark Charteris (Mallock Mk20/21)

JUSTIN HALER TROPHY HISTORIC F3

Races 1 & 2 Benn Simms (Chevron B17)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

and Alex Morton (Condor), with Mark Woodhouse (Elva-BMC 100) fourth.

Adrian Russell (ex-Henri Grandsire Lotus 22) was dominant among the 'pushers', competing for the Barry Westmoreland Memorial Trophy. Points leader Nic Carlton-Smith was his closest rival on Saturday, driving his Class C2 Kieft well to see off Chris Drake's equally curiously styled Elva 300. Tim Child (ex-Curt Lincoln Cooper T59) made two poor starts, but howled back to second on Sunday ahead of Carlton-Smith, who regained third when Drake rotated at the Gooseneck.

Mark Charteris raced the clock in Classic Clubmans, logging a scintillating 1m27.672s (89.80mph), the day's fastest lap, in race two. Tom Eustace recovered from a 360-degree spin out of Charlie's in the opener to win the FFord-engined split, but fell in the finale, rewarding Stephen Littler's perseverance.

MARCUS PYE



RAGING ROAD SPORTS BATTLES At the heart of the HSCC since the 1990s, '70s Road Sports' accessibility is reflected in strong multi marque grids. As with all the best club motorsport, paddock camaraderie is as important as the racing, which is not all about the winners. A battle between Steve Bellerby (TVR 3000M) – 350 miles from home in Cornwall – Stephen Skipworth (Lotus Europa, above), Gary Thomas (Lotus 7 S4) and David Tomkinson (TVR Vixen) raged for most of Sunday's race.



SIMMS SCREAMS TO F3 DOUBLE Few were more passionate about 1000cc Formula 3 'screamers' in 1964-70 than Autosport's reporter Justin Haler, commemorated through the category's annual Cadwell Park visit. Former champion Jim Blockley sportingly lent his newly restored Chevron B17 to Benn Simms and, despite ignition issues scuppering Friday testing, he won both races. Poleman Jeremy Timms (ex-Reine Wisell B15) led Saturday's close opener before crashing at the Gooseneck.



SHAW'S MORGAN MOVE Known as a Porsche man, Dorset's John Shaw won the Historic Road Sports title in a 911 in 2013 and 2014. After a sabbatical, he's back on a very different steed, the Morgan +8 in which marque fanatic Keith Ahlers, preparation guru Billy Bellinger and German Christian Bock have won the Spa Six Hours' Eau Rouge Trophy contest. In the car prepared by Richard Walbyoff's team, Shaw qualified 14th, finished 13th on Saturday, then found 2.3 seconds in improving to ninth on Sunday.

Turiccki and Smith pick up Pickup wins on Brands return

BRANDS HATCH
BARC
5-6 JUNE

Reigning champion George Turiccki and Michael Smith had plenty to celebrate after scoring a win each when Pickup racing returned to Kent for the first time since the end of 2019. Two hard-fought but clean races also provided an example of how to do it compared with a lack of track discipline displayed by a number of other series, including the headline British Truck Racing Championship, on a 23-race weekend.

Four drivers took turns in the lead of race one of the Pickups and, although Turiccki spent the most time in front, it was only in the last lap or so that he had a significant advantage. Mark Willis, Reece Jones and Smith filled out the top four, although for a while a dozen cars were nose to tail.

Smith's foot was in danger of being roasted by a hot exhaust in race one but, suitably bandaged, it didn't slow him down on the way to victory at the second attempt. This time Willis, Daniel Petters and Turiccki were filling the winner's mirrors.

Bidding for his sixth British Truck championship in a row, Ryan Smith was easily quickest in qualifying and won an unusually dull opening race. He finished ahead of Stuart Oliver and Martin Gibson, with David Jenkins in fourth.

From that point on, the fastest trucks started at the back. If a fully reversed starting order for race two might have been asking for trouble, it duly arrived at the first corner where both front-row starters and Oliver were shunted into the gravel, causing a temporary halt. Smith wasted no time in the rerun, hitting the

front on lap five of 14 and leaving Jenkins, Gibson and Oliver to squabble over the minor placings. Division 2 produced a close contest between winner Adam Bint, Brad Smith and Craig Reid ahead of Steven Powell, who had triumphed in race one.

The situation descended into a farce on Sunday morning with two first-corner red flags before race three finally got under way. "Everyone is trying to win on the first corner," said Smith, before apologising to organisers and spectators for the repeated interruptions.

The race itself was all too easy for the reigning champion, who jumped into second place with a spectacular first lap, before passing John Newell for the lead on lap three and disappearing. Newell, Mark Taylor, Oliver and Jenkins were best of the rest.

Stern defence by Oliver delayed Smith's charge in race four, but he passed on lap six of 15 and squeezed ahead of Jenkins on the last corner for second, a manoeuvre that left Jenkins slightly miffed. Gibson won from a front-row start.

Taylor and Oliver headed the finale from start to finish. Newell was third under pressure from Smith, who survived a lap two spin and near-miss from following trucks, and inherited fourth place when Gibson and Jenkins clashed at Paddock Hill Bend. Division 2 was again closer — Reid took the spoils ahead of Powell, but was demoted to second due to gaining an unfair advantage. He had taken the win in the morning result, before Powell had the better of the second Sunday encounter.

The Legends normally guarantee excellent



Race winner Turiccki leads Petters in Pickup action that was close and clean



There were thrills and spills in Trucks, with Borthwick spun out



Mickel leads Legends contest and won two races over weekend

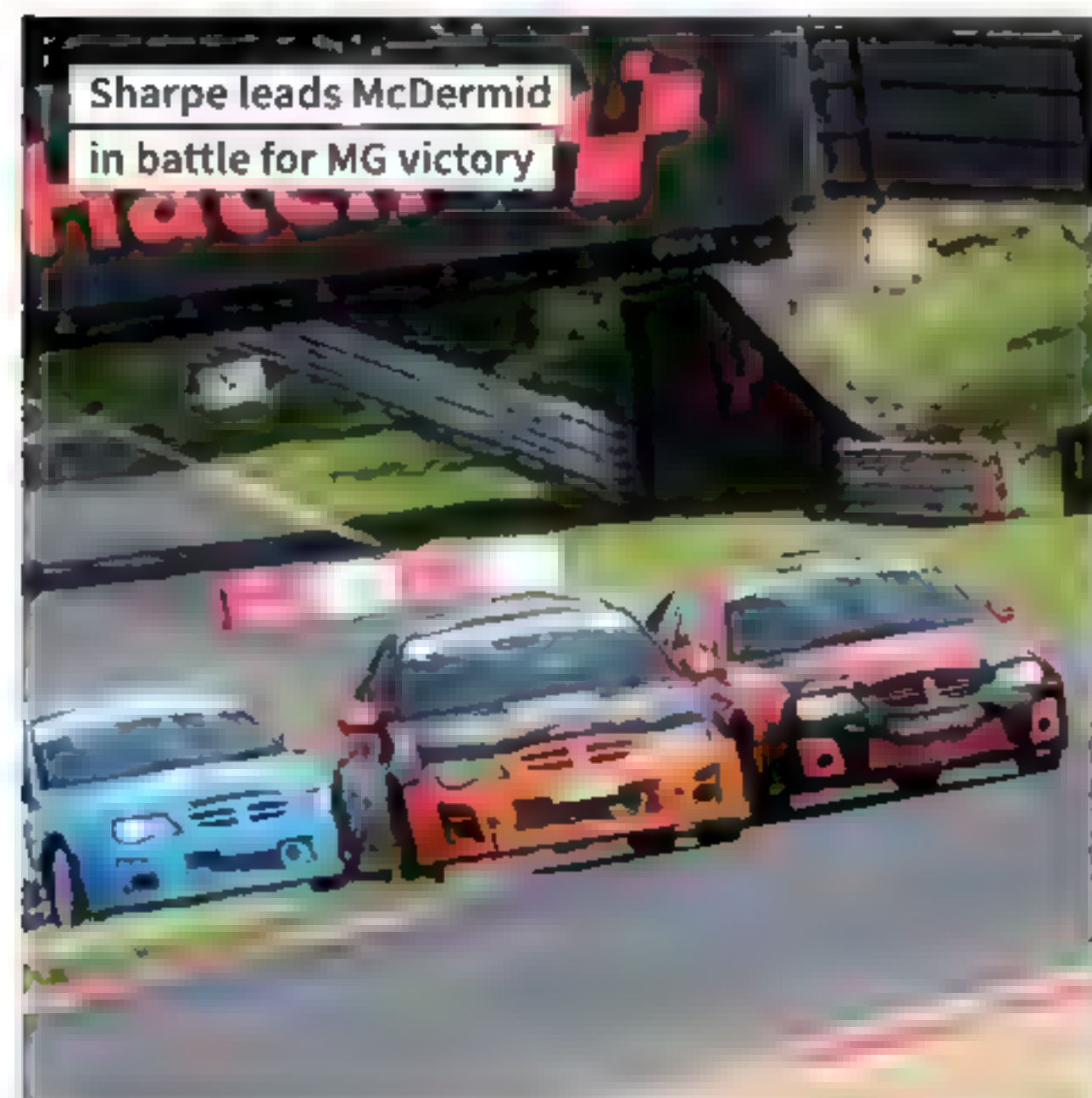
Brands Hatch



entertainment, but their Saturday outings were spoiled by a succession of safety car interventions and red flags. Multiple champion John Mickel and Will Gibson were the heat winners. Paul Simmons was ahead in the final when two stoppages ended the action, but was excluded for failing scrutineering, which promoted Stephen Whitelegg to the win.

Both of Sunday's heats were interrupted, the first going to Mickel and the second to Gibson, who was hounded to the flag by Miles Rudman, reigning champion Dan Clark and former Pickup star Scott Bourne.

Simmons won again in an exciting Sunday final, helped by a front row start but then handicapped by a mid-race caution period. He clung on for the win despite the top men charging through from the back of the grid.



Rudman, Mickel and Gibson finished second, third and fifth as 0.816s covered the first five.

Matt Hammond's dream start to 2021 in the Mini Challenge Trophy turned into a nightmare when the points leader rolled out of Saturday's second encounter in a race-stopping incident. Hammond beat Louie Capozzoli and defending champion Harry Nunn in race one, which ended early after a collision at Paddock.

Hammond lined up seventh on a partially reversed second-race grid, but he and two others were out within less than a lap. This gave Capozzoli a chance to shine, but he'd no sooner taken the lead in the rerun when a gravel trap visit dropped him down the order, eventually to finish seventh. Joe Wiggin had problems at Snetterton and missed Thruxton, but rewarded his team's recovery efforts with a win at Brands. Ricky Page, Morgan Wroot and Charlie Mann all finished within a second of Wiggin.

Four other races, like the Minis, were exclusive to the Saturday programme and included a pair of Intermarque Silhouette outings. The Ginetta of Ray Harris had pole with multiple champion Malcolm Blackman alongside in his Vauxhall Tigra. Blackman did most of the leading in race one, but it was second row starter Steve Burrows (Tigra) who was ahead when it mattered.

With the top 10 reversed for the second race, Burrows retired and Harris this time

WEEKEND WINNERS

PICKUP TRUCKS

Race 1 George Turiccki

Race 2 Michael Smith

BRITISH TRUCK RACING

Races 1, 2 & 3 Ryan Smith (Mercedes Actros)

Race 4 Martin Gibson (MAN TGX)

Race 5 Mark Taylor (MAN TGA)

LEGENDS

Races 1 & 4 John Mickel

Races 2 & 5 Will Gibson

Race 3 Stephen Whitelegg

Race 6 Paul Simmons

MINI CHALLENGE TROPHY

Race 1 Matthew Hammond

Race 2 Joe Wiggin

INTERMARQUE SILHOUETTES

Race 1 Steve Burrows (Vauxhall Tigra)

Race 2 Ray Harris (Ginetta G40r)

KUMHO BMWs

Races 1 & 2 Brad Sheehan (E46 M3)

MG OWNERS' CLUB

Race 1 Steve McDermid (ZR)

Race 2 William Sharpe (ZR)

CITROEN 2CVs

Races 1 & 2 Pete Sparrow (below)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

beat Blackman. Daniel Smith (Mercedes SLK) caught the eye after suffering a broken half-shaft at the start of qualifying. He rose to sixth from 26th in race one, and moved up further to finish third in race two.

Brad Sheehan was a double Kumho BMW winner. Poleman James Card led race one, but headed for the pits when an oil pressure warning light came on. This proved to be a false alarm and, after starting last in race two, he caught but couldn't pass Sheehan.

Steve McDermid (ZR) continued his winning ways in the first of the weekend's MG Owners' Club races, but faced a much harder task in race two in a closely matched quartet of cars. William Sharpe, second at the first attempt, grabbed the race two lead and defended it under massive pressure. McDermid took second from Steve Darbey a lap from the end.

BRIAN PHILLIPS



Team Abba pair of Richard and Sam Neary were in a class of their own at Snetterton

Nearys take it all with dominant GT Cup weekend

SNETTERTON
MSVR
5-6 JUNE

Father-and-son duo Richard and Sam Neary completed a perfect four from four at Snetterton in the GT Cup to continue their impressive run of form.

Neary Sr dominated the first sprint race in his Mercedes-AMG GT3, and the battle for second was where the action took place. Lucky Khera passed John Seale in a similar Lamborghini Huracan GT3 for second in the dying stages, Seale's day getting worse when Grahame Tilley snuck his Nissan Nismo GTR past at Riches for third.

Following a combined Neary effort to win the first pitstop race, their Team Abba Racing victory streak continued when Neary Jr stormed to a 48s win in the second sprint

race. Khera was once again runner-up, after sweeping around Paul Bailey's Brabham BT62 at Turn 3 to gain the spot. Bailey and Seale then tussled at Murrays for the final podium place, but both were forced to pit for repairs, gifting Tilley another third.

Two safety car periods during the first 20 minutes of Sunday's pitstop race meant Neary Sr couldn't extend the sort of lead he would want to overcome their additional 20s success penalty, allowing Khera to jump them in the pits. But, with Neary Jr reeling in Khera's 9.7s lead by more than two seconds per lap, the Lamborghini was easy prey on lap 19 of 25 to seal the quadruple.

Jay McCormack and Andy Perry traded the lead for lap after lap in the 7 Series 1600 opener, having broken away from the chasing pack. McCormack appeared to favour the move into Brundle to claim

the lead, while Perry used the Senna Straight and first two turns to repass. In the end, McCormack braved the outside line at Brundle on the last tour and, despite Perry hanging onto his coat tails, he had enough to hold the win.

It was a similar story in race two between McCormack and David Yates, McCormack using the Bentley Straight and Yates preferring the Senna Straight. McCormack just held on by 0.054s after Yates, who was hampered by misfires in race one, couldn't quite get enough momentum before the line on the last run through.

Perry overcame engine problems, which meant his power cut in and out in race two, to challenge Yates in the finale, but Yates broke the slipstream to win.

Squabbling for the podium positions allowed Phil Jenkins to leave the rest of the 7 Series 420R pack for dust, winning comfortably from Anthony Barnes in the first two races. Justin Heap, Rob Watts and Mark Stansfield were those arguing for third place, the trio side-by-side into Brundle seemingly every time. Watts held on to claim the final trophy spot in the opener.

That looked to be the script again for race two, until contact for Heap and Stansfield at Nelson on lap two while contesting third put Heap out and gave Jamie Bashall the place.

A reversal of the top 10 for the third race, which featured on/off drizzle, didn't stop Jenkins from working his way into the lead. Sixth was his within a handful of turns, and on lap three he danced through the damp Riches corner to move from fifth to third, passing Stansfield for second by the end of that tour. The winning move came a lap

Phil Jenkins took a hat-trick of wins in the 420R category



WEEKEND WINNERS

GT CUP

Race 1 Richard Neary (Mercedes-AMG GT3)

Races 2 & 4 Richard Neary/Sam Neary (Mercedes-AMG GT3)

Race 3 Sam Neary (Mercedes-AMG GT3)

7 RACE SERIES – 1600

Races 1 & 2 Jay McCormack

Race 3 David Yates

7 RACE SERIES – 420R

Races 1, 2 & 3 Phil Jenkins

CLUBMANS SPORTS PROTOTYPES

Race 1 Clive Wood (Mallock Mk23)

Races 2 & 3 Cody Tree (Phantom P94)

PORSCHÉ CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

Race 1 Peter Morris (Porsche 997 C2S, below)

Race 2 Simon Clark (Porsche Cayman S)

GPR TROPHY

Race 1 Jack Sycamore

Race 2 Neil Huggins

911 CHALLENGE

Robert Hollyman



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

later when he used the slipstream down Bentley to nip past Bashall.

Cody Tree won two Clubmans Sports Prototype races in his Phantom P94, the first of which came after a tense duel with opening-race victor Clive Wood for race two that came down to a last-lap scuffle. Wood (Mallock Mk23) had led throughout until the duo jockeyed at Nelson, with Tree emerging to win while Wood slowed with damage and pitted. Tree was given a reprimand and two penalty points, but no more.

Peter Morris won the first Porsche Club Championship race, but he had to work hard with a defensive drive to hold off first reigning champion Simon Clark and then James Caley, who looked to be the quickest. Caley's 997 dispatched first Jake McAleer on the infield and then Clark, who had himself been sniffing for the win prior to Caley's advance, at the Bomb Hole on lap seven of 11. Clark took the win in race two from McAleer, after grabbing the lead midway through the race.

JASON NOBLE

IMPAIRMENT NO BARRIER FOR THOMSON



For any young adult, trying to make it onto the grid is tricky, but for those who have an impairment it can seem a world away entirely.

Kudos, then, to Sarah Thomson, who demonstrated last weekend at Snetterton that such obstacles do not mean an end to the motor racing dream by making her debut in the Porsche Club Championship, despite being deaf. It's a remarkable achievement in itself when the combat of racing is such a sensory experience.

Thomson wears a bonebridge implant behind her ear, which is attached to her skull. It effectively transmits sounds through her bone and, after undergoing three five-hour operations to gain some hearing, she can cope well in one-on-one situations. But the bonebridge can't be worn under a racing helmet, which means innovative solutions in the car are needed.

The Porsche Club Championship has allowed her to incorporate a shift light in the car so that she can see the revs instead of hear them, allowing her to understand the rev pattern. From the experience of her first weekend on-track,

Thomson believes that some tweaks may still be needed so she can get right to the top of the rev range. But, regardless, Saturday represented a crucial first step on her racing journey.

"It's been really good – I'm loving it and enjoying it," she said. "I've only ever actually done three trackdays before, so I'm hitting it at the deep end. It's quite a nerve-racking thing – racing in general is nerve-racking, but added with the deafness I was not sure if I could do it because of the revs, but I have proven that you can. It's encouraging people that they can do something, and there isn't a limit."

Previous plans for a race licence were hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in three postponements, but the 21-year-old now has everything in place and is planning to contest the remainder of the Porsche Club season.

Big strides were already made over the course of Saturday's 20-minute qualifying session and two 25-minute races. Her fastest lap in race one was a full 10 seconds quicker than her qualifying time, and another half a second was found in race two.

Handily, her father Ken, who is helping where he can, is no stranger to racing. He won the GT3 class of British GT in a Darrin T90 in 1996, and has experience in Scottish championships and hillclimbs. "I was too old when I started, but this was an opportunity for Sarah – she wanted to do it and who am I to stand in the way?" he said. "It's an opportunity at her age I would have loved to have done, and it's important for me to enjoy the passion with her. Together we are all learning."

JASON NOBLE



Thomson made racing debut at Snetterton



Middlehurst withstood pressure from Walker to land David Leslie Trophy

Middlehurst grabs the trophy as Scottish racing resumes

**KNOCKHILL
SMRC
6 JUNE**

Chris Middlehurst won the David Leslie Trophy as the National Formula Ford 1600 Championship played a starring role in the first Scottish circuit racing event of 2021 at Knockhill last weekend.

Having topped pre-event testing, opening free practice and qualifying, Kevin Mills Racing Spectrum driver Alex Walker had dominated the weekend, taking his third win in four races in an opening encounter that was red-flagged after team-mate Megan Gilkes got beached on the exit of the chicane. Middlehurst's Van Diemen crossed the line in the lead at the time of the red flag, but it was Walker who took the win on countback.

Come the second race, Middlehurst got the jump on polesitter Walker and led throughout, with the top three – which included the Low Dempsey Racing Ray of Max Esterson – covered for much of the race by less than half

a second. Walker battled valiantly, but Middlehurst found an extra gear to extend his lead to 1.788s, the largest all weekend, to clinch victory.

Reigning champion Jordan Gronkowski (Van Diemen) won both of the concurrent Scottish FF1600 races, beating the Graham Brunton Racing Ray of Michael Gray, making his first FF1600 start in eight years. The Rays of Andrew Elliott and Neil Broome completed the podium in races one and two respectively.

Michael Weddell kicked off his Scottish Mini Cooper Cup title ambitions in fine fashion with a pair of wins and a third place. Weddell, the 2019 series runner-up who sat out the shortened 2020 campaign, withstood a fierce attack from Ian Munro to prevail in race one.

Weddell had to fight back in race two after losing out to Munro at Duffus Dip at around half-distance. A late divebomb down the inside of Munro at McIntyres with four laps to go sealed a second successive triumph. Weddell then started eighth for the reversed-grid final race, but worked his way up to the podium positions as Daniel Patterson staved off Neil Hose for his first win.

Reigning champion Ross Dunn and Dan Martin shared the spoils in a pair of scintillating Scottish C1 Cup races. Dunn maintained his pole position at the start of the opener and duly managed a slender 0.9s margin over Paul Luti, who was eventually overhauled by Martin and SMRC Esports champion Sam Corson by the finish.

Race two was another cracker, with Martin beating the impressive Corson by just under 0.5s. Dunn completed the

podium ahead of Luti, with the top four split by less than a second at the flag.

The Scottish Classic Sports & Saloons enjoyed a strong 23-car grid, with Tommy Gilmartin (Morgan +8) and John Kinmond (Rover 3500) splitting the wins. Shonny Paterson scored a double podium in his Triumph TR8, while reigning champion Bruce Mitchell took his Lotus Europa to a third place.

Last year's Scottish Fiesta ST Cup title protagonists produced the finish of the weekend in the opening encounter of the year, with Steven Gray beating champion Dave Colville to the win by just 0.001s. Colville got his revenge in race two, edging Gray by a mammoth margin of 0.2s.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON

WEEKEND WINNERS

NATIONAL & SCOTTISH FORMULA FORD 1600

Race 1 Alex Walker (Spectrum 011)

Race 2 Chris Middlehurst
(Van Diemen LA10)

SCOTTISH MINI COOPER CUP

Races 1 & 2 Michael Weddell

Race 3 Daniel Patterson

SCOTTISH C1 CUP

Race 1 Ross Dunn

Race 2 Dan Martin

SCOTTISH CLASSIC SPORTS & SALOONS

Race 1 Tommy Gilmartin (Morgan +8)

Race 2 John Kinmond (Rover 3500)

SCOTTISH FIESTA ST CUP

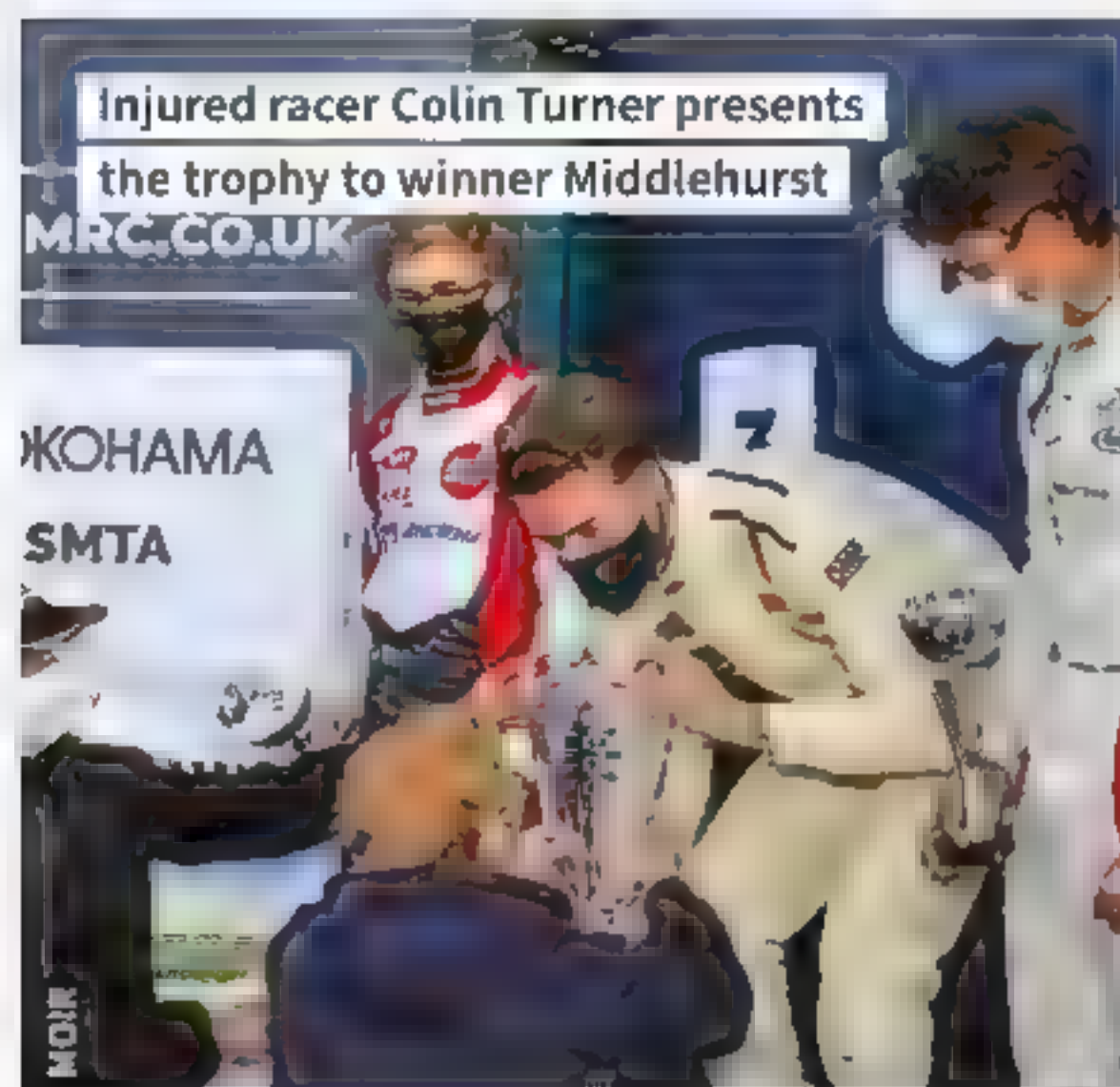
Race 1 Steven Gray

Race 2 Dave Colville

NORTHERN SPORTS & SALOONS

Races 1 & 2 Paul Brydon (BMW M3)

For full results visit: speedhive.mylaps.com



Injured racer Colin Turner presents the trophy to winner Middlehurst

A Summers day at Shelsley with double victory

**SHELSLEY WALSH
BRITISH HILLCLIMB
5-6 JUNE**

Alex Summers was the hero of the day at Shelsley Walsh on Sunday as a fantastic day of hillclimbing delivered two British Hillclimb Championship top 12 run-off victories for the local ace.

On a day that started damp and steadily dried, it was Top Ess that delivered the toughest challenge as the damp hung under the trees for a long time. During the day it claimed four victims, including run-off contender Simon Moyse (Gould GR59).

The first run-off fell to Summers by a handy margin of nearly half a second as his 24.07s climb earned him his first championship win of the season with the Cosworth-powered DJ Firestorm. "There is usually grip as you turn in when it's like that," he said of the final corner of the 1000-yard hill. Sean Gould edged points leader Wallace Menzies back to third, while Scott Moran and Trevor Willis also broke the 25s mark.

After several delays due to incidents, the second run-off ran well after 6pm as the temperature started to drop and rain clouds built up, but the hill was fully dry aside from any lingering damp at Top Ess, and it was worth the wait.

As fastest qualifier, Summers was last to run, and moments earlier Menzies had put a big marker down with a 23.17s time. Summers donned his metaphorical 'big boy' trousers and attacked the hill with the Indycar engine wailing at high revs, knowing that a low 23s was what he needed. With typical commitment through the fast sweeps on the run up to the Esses, Summers touched 136mph before braking for the Esses and stopped the clock at 23.15s to beat his rival by just 0.02s.



Summers has closed on points leader Menzies

It was a fantastic climax to a day of top class competition at the head of the championship. "What a day!" said Summers. "Wallace is absolutely awesome and it is just a privilege to race against these guys." Menzies was equally buzzing after a glorious battle. "That was fantastic: a great day of racing," he said.

However, this was no two-way contest, with Gould only 0.05s down on Menzies, despite struggling with traction control settings. Having set the pace in practice on Saturday with a storming 23.06s, it all looked good. But the track changed with overnight rain, and the Gould-Judd got slower as the traction control held it back. "We learned a lot," said Gould.

Moran, too, was right in the hunt with a 23.36s, making it four cars split by 0.2s, while Willis and David Uren also joined the sub-24s club. Uren's Gould was finally back on song after overcoming a niggling engine problem that spoiled his first two rounds of the season.

The smaller-engined cars will always be at a disadvantage at a dry Shelsley, but star performers in the lower reaches of the run-offs were Paul Haines, David

Warburton and Eynon Price.

Two of the heroes of the day were the Greenen brothers Andy and Adam, who rocketed their 1100cc Empire Evo2 into the run-offs with breathtaking commitment. Running on methanol for the first time, the Empire was driven to the limit, running flat-out from the startline all the way to the braking area for the Bottom Ess, and Adam's 25.34s climb for ninth in the second run-off was the stand-out.

PAUL LAWRENCE

SHELSLEY WALSH RESULTS

ROUND 1

1 Alex Summers (2.65 DJ Firestorm-Cosworth) 24.07s; 2 Sean Gould (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59JB) 24.51s; 3 Wallace Menzies (3.3 Gould-Cosworth GR59M) 24.57s; 4 Scott Moran (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59J) 24.74s; 5 Trevor Willis (3.2 OMS-RTE 28) 24.93s; 6 Dave Uren (3.5 Gould-NME GR55B) 25.09s; 7 Paul Haines (1.3t Gould-Suzuki GR59) 25.56s; 8 David Warburton (1.6 Gould-Suzuki GR59) 25.91s; 9 Eynon Price (1.6 Force-Hayabusa TA) 26.77s; 10 Graham Wynn (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59J) 26.90s.

ROUND 2

1 Summers 23.15s; 2 Menzies 23.17s; 3 Gould 23.22s; 4 Moran 23.36s; 5 Willis 23.75s; 6 Uren 23.76s; 7 Haines 24.76s; 8 Warburton 25.09s; 9 Adam Greenen (1.1 Empire-Hayabusa Evo2) 25.34s; 10 Wynn 25.41s.

POINTS

1 Menzies 76; 2 Summers 72; 3 Gould 56; 4 Willis and Moran 46; 6 Will Hall 39.

For full results visit: britishhillclimb.co.uk



Menzies was only 0.02s slower than Summers on second run

CAN CAMMISH AND CO PREVENT KING RETAINING HIS CROWN?

Three more of the BTCC's support series are finally due to begin at Snetterton this weekend and there's plenty to keep an eye on, including a fascinating Carrera Cup GB battle

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Three drivers have left an indelible mark on the Porsche Carrera Cup GB over the past six seasons. Each of them has been a dominant champion; each secured the crown a round early; and each was the unquestioned benchmark when it came to qualifying and race pace. But only one of Dan Cammish, Dan Harper and Harry King had ever been on the grid at a time. Until now.

Cammish's unfortunate winter exit from the Team Dynamics British Touring Car squad through no fault of his own allowed him to return to his Porsche roots and take on King, the most dominant of the three Carrera Cup megastars, setting up a mouthwatering battle with two titans of the category facing off against each other for the first time.

For Cammish it means a switch back to a rear-wheel-drive sportscar, after handling a front-wheel-drive Honda tin-top for the past three years. And that meant a brief period of readjustment during testing. "It's a very different car to drive than a touring car," says Cammish, who admits he found getting to grips with the Honda BTCC machine easier than adapting back to the Porsche. "The thing I had forgotten

about the Porsche is just how fast it is — it feels like the tracks have shrunk! You're arriving at each corner so much quicker than you were in a touring car. My first few laps were more of an adventure than I thought they would be. I've done four or five days and it's amazing how quickly it starts to come back."

Cammish was the undisputed Carrera Cup king in 2015 and 2016, before missing out on making it a hat-trick of crowns the following year when a Porsche Supercup campaign meant he had to skip an event. But, just because he has 32 series victories to his name, Cammish says that doesn't mean he's assured of more glory this time around.

"I've had a lot of success in the past but that's no guarantee of success in the future," states Cammish, who was offered the full-season BTC Honda touring car drive, but stuck with his Porsche plan, staying loyal to Simon Leonard's Redline squad. "Harry King is an exceptional talent — he was just on a bit of a different level to everyone else at times last year. He starts as favourite but if I can get myself back to where I was at the end of 2017, I would like to think I can run him pretty close.

"There's pressure both ways but it's only really what we put on

Competitive Carrera Cup entry will be aiming to stop King (centre) winning again



Series sophomore Hanafin is targeting a title challenge

“I’VE HAD A LOT OF SUCCESS IN THE PAST BUT THAT’S NO GUARANTEE OF SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE”

passing ability and flat-out approach winning him scores of fans. It is therefore no wonder that Cammish says he plans to put the skills he learned in the rough-and-tumble of the BTCC to good use again this year. As for King, he is taking nothing for granted, despite his mesmerising display in 2020.

“I’m starting with a completely clean slate – no points carry over from last year,” he says. “It’s important to approach it exactly the same way. I’ve been training the same and I’m trying to replicate everything I’ve done last year.”

King is dovetailing his second year as a Porsche GB Junior in the Carrera Cup with a campaign in the Supercup, where he’s getting to grips with the latest ‘Type 992’ version of the 911 GT3 Cup car, for the newly formed Parker Revs squad. But after such a strong season last year, King says he does not feel any expectation to repeat his dominance when going up against Cammish.

“The only pressure I have is from myself – I’m the biggest enemy when it comes to that,” he says. “Dan’s got a lot of experience and he might’ve had a few years off, but it would be wrong to turn a blind eye to him. When a lot of people mention Carrera Cup, Dan Cammish is the name people think of and I’m looking to upset that!”

But both Cammish and King are quick to point out that this is far from a two-horse race. In fact, the Carrera Cup grid is overflowing with potential frontrunners this year. Expect Will Martin and Lorcan Hanafin to be on the pace right from the off, the former Ginetta Junior racers now having a year of Porsche experience under their belts, while proven race winner Lewis Plato is another returnee, now driving for the Valluga squad. Add in 2018 British Formula 4 champion Kiern Jewiss making the switch to sportscars, and there are plenty of drivers to keep an eye on.

Cammish highlighted Hanafin for his one-lap pace, and the JTR racer is eyeing a title bid in his second season in the series. “With a year of experience, it’s going to make a world of difference,” says Hanafin, who has increased his amount of time on the simulator and training compared to last season. “Last year was

to bed myself in and this season’s the one where I can really prove myself to people and to sponsors and show what I’m capable of.

“I think the main competition is going to be Dan and Harry – the main focus is going to be on them. In a way, I’m coming into it as an underdog, and everyone likes an underdog!”

Given the competitive line-up, anything is possible in this most eagerly anticipated of Carrera Cup showdowns. >>



Dominant champions Cammish (left) and King will go toe-to-toe this year

ourselves. I’m coming back but we’re both in quite a good position. If he beats me, people are going to say Harry was exceptional and you got beaten by someone very, very good. If I beat him, then they’ll say Dan was always quick in Porsche racing and very good in touring cars.”

Cammish is likely to have his work cut out landing a third title when battling with King. The 2019 Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion entered the world of Porsche racing in some style last year, his breathtaking



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SC DEVELOPMENT MECHANICAL TEAM LEADER

PU CONFIRMATION AND DURABILITY GROUP LEADER

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CLOSING DATE: 24th JUNE 2021



GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

In the space of a couple of days during the off-season, Adam Smalley went from thinking his bid to win this year's Ginetta GT4 Supercup crown was over before it started to suddenly having a chunk of his budget in place and being raring to go.

"I didn't think I would be racing," admits 2018 Ginetta Junior champion Smalley. "I really wanted to but couldn't string the money together – I was spending all day, every day trying to get sponsors and wasn't getting anywhere."

But just after he had informed Elite Motorsport team boss Eddie Ives that he was unlikely to be on the grid, suddenly a deal was agreed with Optimum Pay Group and Smalley's plans were back on track.

Smalley had a tricky beginning to his rookie GT4 Supercup campaign last year, not helped by doing little pre-season running, but stormed to three wins and four other podiums in the final three events, just missing out on third in the points. Now he's looking to continue that momentum into 2021.

"I'm trying to hit the ground running," says Smalley. "We did rock up to the first round with no testing last year because it was so last-minute. This year I'm more prepared so I've got a better chance."

Smalley is not the only race winner back for another crack at the title. Tom Hibbert just pipped Smalley to third in last year's points and, after joining Rob Boston Racing for this season, will be a threat again. Smalley's fellow Elite drivers – 2020 Ginetta Junior runner-up Josh Rattican and Tom Emson – will also be ones to watch, as will the returning Carlito Miracco.

Smalley's sole focus now is on repeating his success from the Junior series by also winning the GT4 Supercup crown in his sophomore season.

MINI CHALLENGE

"I won the Rookie Cup in my first year in the Mini Challenge and came third in the championship; last year I came second and won the Graduate Cup and I've got one more cup to win now!"

There is no doubting that Dan Zelos has the overall Mini crown in his sights. The Excelr8 driver scored more podiums than anyone else in the 2020 season but failed to take a win. He is now bidding to address that, starting on home soil at Snetterton this weekend.



Smalley had a very strong end to 2020 Ginetta season

"I DIDN'T THINK I WOULD BE RACING – I WAS TRYING TO GET SPONSORS AND WASN'T GETTING ANYWHERE"

"I'm looking to keep the momentum up from the end of last season – I feel ready to come back fighting," says Zelos. "I was consistently in the top five last year – it was a bit of a Colin Turkington-esque season, but perhaps I didn't take enough risks to go for wins that may have helped me at the end of the season. But I learned a lot again last year and I'm improving every year."

Zelos will need to be on top form to achieve his goal of landing the main prize this season. Joining him at Excelr8 is Max Bird, a three-time 2020 winner, while Jason Lockwood and Oliver Barker showed impressive flashes of speed during their rookie events. Race winners Max Coates (with the new Graves Motorsport squad) and Lewis Brown are also sure to be in the mix, along with former Fiesta ace Isaac Smith.

For Zelos, maintaining last year's consistency will be key as the series is back up from five to seven events. "There's more races to win but also more races to slip up and make mistakes," he says. And with 28 other drivers provisionally entered, there'll be no shortage of people ready to pounce during what's set to be another intriguing campaign. ✨



Zelos is set to be one of the Mini Challenge frontrunners



FATHER'S DAY GIFT GUIDE

1 **MOTOGP 21**

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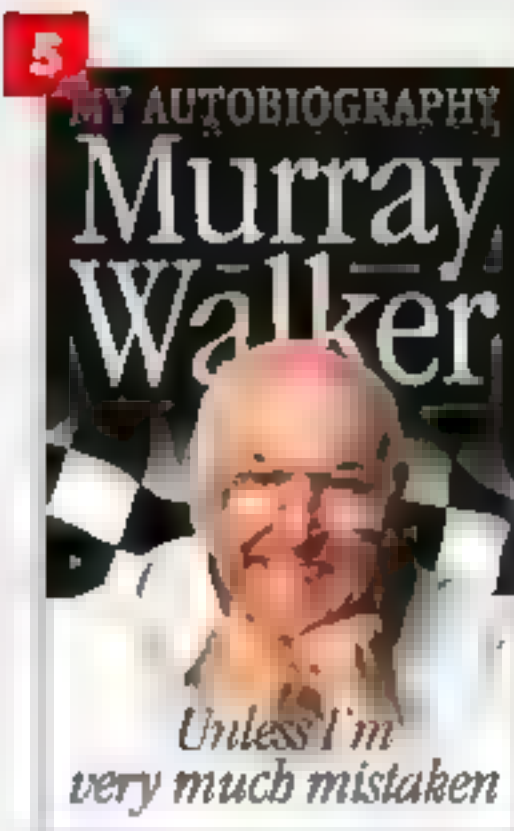
Website motogpvideogame.com

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**3** **F1 2010-19 SEASON
REVIEWS**RRP £89.99 (DVD) | Website dukevideo.com

Relive all the best action from the last decade with F1's 2010-19 season reviews, featuring each race from every season, as well as exclusive footage courtesy of FOM.

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**5** **MURRAY WALKER Unless
I'm Very Much Mistaken**RRP £14.99 | Website harpercollins.co.uk

To many, Murray Walker was the voice of F1, and the obituaries published after his death earlier this year gave the chance to reflect on his legacy. But for an insight into his remarkable life, there's no better read than his autobiography, originally published in 2003.

From following in his father's footsteps and racing bikes, to fighting in the Second World War and eventually becoming a broadcaster, it's an extraordinary tale of a life well lived.

6 **LE MANS '66 (Blu-ray)**

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Website 20thcenturystudios.com

The latest Hollywood blockbuster based around motorsport, *Le Mans '66* tells the story of Ford's attempts to beat Ferrari at the legendary Le Mans 24 Hours.

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10



WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

World Endurance Championship

Round 2/6

Algarve International Circuit, Portugal

13 June

Livestream on Motorsport.tv, Sat 1800, Sun 1030

TV Live Eurosport 2, Sun 1400

IndyCar Series

Round 6/15

Detroit, USA

12-13 June

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sat 1900, Sun 1700

IMSA SportsCar

Round 4/12

Detroit, USA

12 June

ADAC GT Masters

Round 2/7

Red Bull Ring, Austria

12-13 June

Livestream on Motorsport.tv, Sat 1530, Sun 1525

NASCAR Xfinity Series

Round 14/33

Texas Motor Speedway, USA

12 June

NASCAR Truck Series

Round 11/22

Texas Motor Speedway, USA

12 June



UK MOTORSPORT

Snetterton BARC

12-13 June

British F4, BTCC, Ginetta GT4 Supercup, Ginetta Junior, Mini Challenge, Porsche Carrera Cup

TV Live ITV4, Sun 1100

Oulton Park BARC

12 June

Britcar Endurance & Praga, Britcar Trophy, CNC Heads Sports/Saloons, Mighty Minis, Radicals

Castle Combe MSVR

12 June

F3 Cup, Focus Cup, Monoposto, Heritage FF1600, MSVT Trackday Championship

Brands Hatch 750MC

12-13 June

Bikesports, BMW Car Club, Classic Stock Hatch, Club Enduro, F1000, Hot Hatch, Ma7da, MR2, Roadsports

Thruxton BARC

12-13 June

Sixties Touring Car Challenge/

U2TC, Classic Alfa Challenge, Historic Touring Car Challenge/ Tony Dron Trophy, HRDC Allstars, Jack Sears Trophy, Jaguar Classic Challenge, Jochen Rindt Trophy, Pre-'63 GTs, Stirling Moss Trophy, Woodcote Trophy

Donington Park MSVR

12-13 June

Ferrari Challenge UK, Classic

Silverstone MGCC

12-13 June

BCV8s, Cockshoot Cup, Equipe GTS, Equipe Libre, Equipe Pre-'63/'50s, MG Cup, MG Midget/Sprite Challenge, MG Trophy, Mini Se7en/S-Class

Cadwell Park CSCC

12-13 June

Classic K, Future Classics, Magnificent Sevens, Modern Classics, New Millennium, Open Series, Special Saloons and Modsports, Swinging '60s, Tin Tops, Turbo Tin Tops

Knockhill BRSCC

12-13 June

BMW Compact Cup, Caterhams (270R/310R/ Academy/Roadsport/ Seven UK), ST-XR Challenge

Mondello Park MPSC*

12-13 June

Fiesta ST/Zetec, Formula BOSS, Formula Sheane, Formula Vee, Future Classics, Historics, Irish Supercars/ITCC/SEAT Supercup, Strykers

Mallory Park CMMC

12-13 June

CMMC Classic/Modern Challenge, Intermarque Silhouettes, Metro Cup, Modified Fords, Super Saloons, WRDA

*Behind closed doors





FROM THE ARCHIVE

Henri Pescarolo (#42 Frank Williams March 712M), Graham Hill (#2 Rondel Racing Brabham BT36) and Ronnie Peterson (#36 works March 712M) head the field at the start of the

50-lap final of the 1971 Jochen Rindt Memorial Trophy at Thruxton. Heat two winner Pescarolo was initially outdragged by Hill, but soon found a way past only for his engine to fail four laps into the race. Veteran

Hill was then locked in a brilliant battle with rising star Peterson to the flag. The Swede sliced by in the closing stages, then on the final lap was delayed by a backmarker, allowing Hill to win by 0.6 seconds.



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WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN

The Indy Lights champion who never raced in IndyCar

JEAN-KARL VERNAY

Jean-Karl Vernay is a man in demand at present. Combining his race-winning first WTCR appearances as a Hyundai factory driver with the Nurburgring 24 Hours last weekend, the 2017 TCR International champion is the only member of the manufacturer's WTCR roster who will appear in the inaugural season of Pure ETCR that kicks off later this month at Vallelunga. But the 33-year-old's career might have gone in a totally different direction had his title-winning Indy Lights campaign in 2010 resulted in an IndyCar seat for 2011.

Victory on his debut with Sam Schmidt Motorsport on the streets of St Petersburg was the first of five on his way to the crown, with a best finish of third on the ovals. But even with the \$1.5million put up by Lights to aid its champion in making the step up, Vernay became its first title-holder since David Empringham in 1996 never to reach the top rung on the US open-wheel ladder.

"I didn't receive any calls to go to IndyCar, we were miles away from finding a ride," explains Vernay, whose only IndyCar test came at Sebring for Conquest Racing.

"On track I did everything I was

able to do being a rookie, not knowing all the tracks, no knowledge of oval racing. We had a really good season. The problem of IndyCar is if you want to do it right, you've got to have \$5-6m. Unfortunately I didn't receive any calls from any big teams and it didn't happen."

Vernay maintains that he was "not a huge fan" of the ovals, particularly given the behaviour of some "completely crazy" rivals who made it "sometimes a bit scary". But while he believes his adaptability would have made him a good fit for IndyCar, like title-winning compatriots Sebastien Bourdais and Simon Pagenaud, he says he's not bitter about missing out.

"The Indy 500 is huge and I'm quite sure every driver wants to do it once," says Vernay. "But I'm not that angry about not being able to go to IndyCar, because we saw with [Robert] Wickens and [Justin] Wilson, this is a dangerous series and I'm happy with what I'm doing."

"It's not what should happen when you are winning Indy Lights, but life is life and it didn't happen for some reason. I believe in karma and maybe my place was more in Europe."

JAMES NEWBOLD



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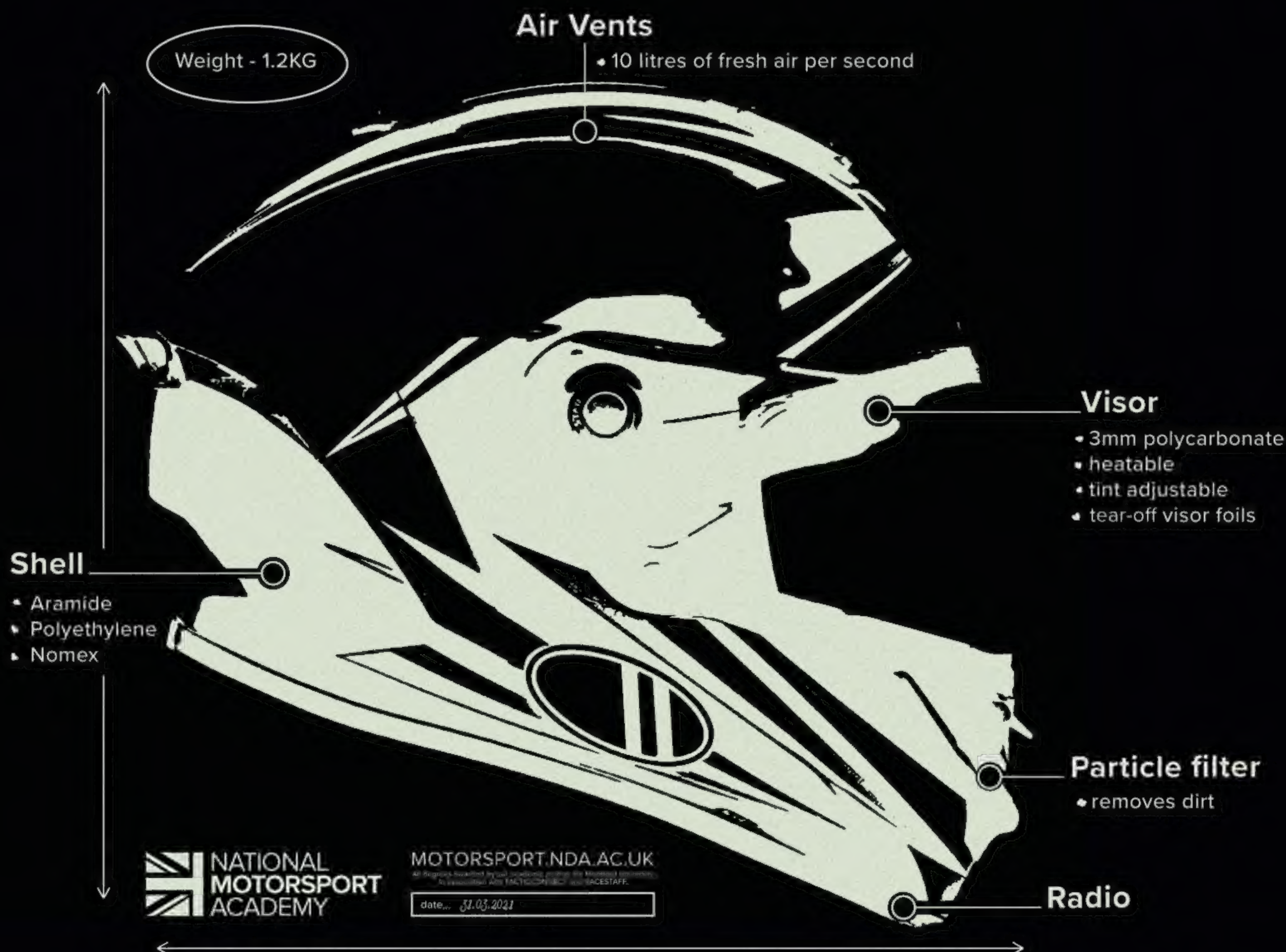
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